

LESSON 1

DANIEL'S DREAM

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Will Send an Everlasting King

SCRIPTURE: Daniel 7

GOD'S BIG STORY: While in Babylonian exile, one night Daniel dreams of four fierce beasts who would bring chaos. But the dream ends with God's everlasting King bringing order through His eternal reign.

WORD OF WONDER: A child will be born to us. A son will be given to us. He will rule over us. And he will be called Wonderful Adviser and Mighty God. He will also be called Father Who Lives Forever and Prince Who Brings Peace. —Isaiah 9:6

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- ****Pre-Service: Interactive Game: Build-A-Beast**
- Welcome Question: What is the weirdest dream you've ever had?
- Prayer of Invitation
- Declaring God's Wonder
- Worship (pick 2)
 - O Come (All Ye Faithful), Great Things (Do You Hear What I Hear), Joy to the World
- God's Big Story
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- Responding in Worship: Angels We Have Heard (Gloria the King Has Come)
- Blessing Your Kids



God With Us Elementary Spotify playlist

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

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In ninth grade, just after second period gym class, I overheard classmates talking worriedly in the hallway. They used words like *airplane*, *towers*, and *collapsed*. What on earth was going on? Then in third period, our class watched the news. Fourth period too. The date was September 11.

I had never seen such a display of violence—people so intent on harming other people. It felt like the world had changed, and I didn't quite feel at home in it. It made me long for something better.

Read Daniel 7:1–14. Daniel 7 invites us to remember that God is always at work, even when life is dark or our burdens are heavy. God's people were in exile when Daniel received his vision. The Babylonian Empire reigned supreme—and in that era, violence was power. But God gave Daniel a vision of an everlasting King whose kingdom will never be destroyed. At Christmas, we celebrate the birth of that King—Jesus! And we look to the day when Jesus will come again and make all things right.

What are you facing in life? What darkness surrounds you? What violence makes you feel out of place in this world? Know that God is still at work. His plans haven't failed. Jesus has come and will come again. God will send an everlasting King, and death and darkness will give way to life.

—**Michael Rade**

Care & Support Ministry Assistant; Itinerant Preacher
Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Daniel was taken to Babylon after King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon besieged Jerusalem. Daniel was trained to serve in the king's court and rose to prominence because of his God-given ability to understand dreams and visions. He spent most of his life in exile.

WHAT?

Daniel dreamed of four beasts representing kings who would rule on the earth. The fourth beast was especially terrifying and ruthless. God would judge the beasts and destroy the fourth beast, establishing an everlasting kingdom for His people ruled by the Son of Man.

WHERE?

During the reign of King Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel was put in charge of the province of Babylon, including the city of Babylon and its neighboring towns. Babylon was located along the lower Euphrates River, about 50 miles south of Baghdad in present-day Iraq.

WHEN?

Jerusalem fell to Babylon around 587/586 BC during the reign of King Nebuchadnezzar, who ruled Babylon from 605 to 562 BC. Daniel's dream in Daniel 7 occurred during the first year of the tenure of Belshazzar, who served as regent in Babylon from about 553 to 543 BC.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Daniel's vision of an everlasting King—one like a son of man—demonstrates that God had not forgotten His promise to bring a king from David's line who would rule forever (Daniel 7:13–14). This anticipates the birth of Jesus, a descendant of David, who often refers to Himself as the Son of Man.

Large Group

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

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As kids arrive...

Around 20 minutes before service begins, display series theme loop. Play high-energy music in the background.

LG Leader walks around the room on mic and greets kids by name as they enter the room. Welcome kids by name and greet them with enthusiasm. Be extra intentional about hearing and responding to what they say.

SLIDE: SERIES THEME LOOP

VIDEO: COUNTDOWN (2min OR 30sec) Start a countdown to begin game 10 minutes prior to service start)

Interactive Game: Build-A-Beast

7-10 MINUTES PRE-SERVICE

SUPPLIES: butcher paper or posterboard (2), tape, markers or crayons

SLIDE: BUILD-a-BEAST

Ahead of time, tape two large sheets of butcher paper or posterboard on the wall at the kids' height.

"Today we are going to build a beast! We'll use our creativity to make the most imaginative beasts we can think of!"

Invite kids to form two teams. Let them know their teams will be working together to create the craziest or most imaginative beast they can come up with. Invite kids to come up one at a time and add one body part or feature to their team's beast. For example, the first child might draw a head, the second might draw eyes or horns, the third might draw a furry arm, and so on. After everyone has had a turn, or multiple turns, judge the beasts and declare each team the winner of one category: craziest or most imaginative. If you have extra paper, you can play another round.



Leader Tip: For Older Kids. This activity might be more challenging if done as a relay or with a two-minute time limit—this guarantees that kids must be creative but quick!

SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH

We created some amazing beasts! Did you know that in God's big story today, Daniel saw some frightening beasts in a dream? God used this dream to show Daniel that one day He would send a King who would win against evil and reign forever. I'm excited to learn more about today's Wonder Truth: **GOD WILL SEND AN EVERLASTING KING.**"



Welcome Question

SUPPLIES: paper, coloring utensils, poster board OR whiteboard, dry-erase markers (if needed)

SLIDE: WELCOME QUESTION

At service start time, draw kids' attention to the Welcome Question: "What is the weirdest dream you've ever had? Invite kids to write answers on the poster board or whiteboard.



"Wow, dreams can be so interesting! Today we're going to learn how God gave Daniel an amazing vision at night that helped him understand how God would reign forever. But, first, it's time to be curious."

Small Group

Introduce small group time. While kids are in small group, consider sitting in the groups for a few minutes each. Engage and interact as is appropriate.

Countdown

After about 15 minutes of small group, give a 5 minute warning and begin the countdown.

VIDEO: COUNTDOWN

"Hey everyone! Welcome to our Large Group Worship time! My name is _____ and I'm excited to take this time to worship God, review what we just read, and talk about ways we can respond to what we are learning about God! We are going to pray as we prepare our hearts to worship God!"

Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use your own words. Here is an example: **God, thank You for this time we get to be together to learn more about You and Your Word. We pray that as we learn and listen today, Your Spirit would fill us up and help us trust in You. Thank You that You keep Your promises and have sent us an everlasting King in Jesus! In Jesus' name, Amen.**

Declaring God's Wonder

SLIDE: DECLARATION

Read each line boldly and invite kids to repeat after you.

Thank You, God, that You are good! (Kids repeat.)

You made me on purpose, for a purpose. (Kids repeat.)

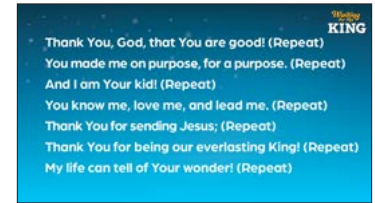
And I am Your kid! (Kids repeat.)

You know me, love me, and lead me. (Kids repeat.)

Thank You for sending Jesus; (Kids repeat.)

Thank You for being our everlasting King! (Kids repeat.)

My life can tell of Your wonder! (Kids repeat.)



Worship

****NEW SONGS!!** Consider sharing some about the songs you are going to sing. What they mean, why we sing them, why they are meaningful and important to you!

"We're going to stand and sing together! One way that we show love to God is to worship through song! So stand up, sing loud, and join in the motions with us. God loves to hear us sing praises to Him! Let's stand together and sing!"

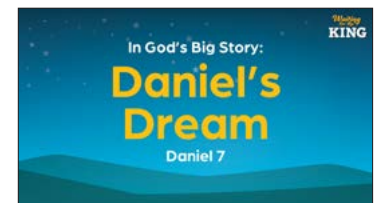
WORSHIP VIDEOS: O Come (All Ye Faithful), Great Things (Do You Hear What I Hear), Joy to the World (((pick 2)))

God's Big Story

SLIDE: TITLE

Consider using the Building Blocks on page 3 to introduce today's story. Let them know that Daniel is one of the prophets in the Bible, and the book that tells his story is in the Old Testament.

"Let's start by watching part of God's big story directly from the Bible. Afterward, we will watch and experience more of the story!"



LESSON 1 DANIEL'S DREAM

EXPERIENCE IT! SCRIPT

SUPPLIES: kid-safe scissors, glue or tape, coloring utensils, clipboards (1 per kid, optional), timer (optional)

RESOURCES: Story Sheet (1 per kid)

Ahead of time, print copies of the Story Sheet for each kid.

"Many of us have had weird and even scary dreams, including me! In God's big story today, Daniel had a scary dream. But an angel explained the dream's meaning to Daniel. It was actually full of hope, especially for those living in exile and waiting for God to act.

Each of you gets think about today's story by creating illustrations. While I review the story, each of you can write, underline, draw, whatever you want on your paper! You will share it will your small group after and take it home to tell your parent's about Daniel's dream!

Review the story using all or some of the script below. Words in red are on the kid's papers.

One night, when Belshazzar was king of Babylon, Daniel had a special dream while he was lying in bed. In his dream, he saw amazing things and wrote them down so he wouldn't forget.

In his dream, Daniel saw the winds of heaven stirring up the great sea. In those days, people were scared of the sea, with its waves sloshing all around. The unpredictable sea was kind of like life in Babylon. God's people living in exile never knew what trouble each day might bring.

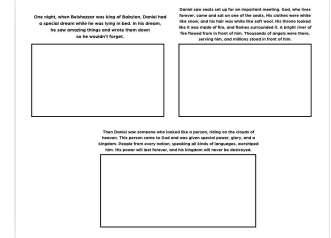
In the dream, the trouble came out of the sea. Four beastly creatures arose. The first three looked like a mixture of different animals that were hungry and fierce. This is a wild dream!

To keep the story moving, consider giving kids one minute to draw each picture. Use a timer, and when a minute is up, encourage kids to put down their coloring utensils, direct their eyes to you, and listen to the next part of the story. If there is extra time at the end, give kids a chance to finish any incomplete drawings.

Daniel was really troubled by his dream! Thankfully, an angel visited him and told him what the dream meant. The angel explained that the four beasts stood for four kings who would rule on earth. They would be powerful, but in the end God's kingdom is the only kingdom that would last. Even that terrible fourth beast would come to nothing. The last horn—the one who thought it was big and important—stood for an especially cruel king who would speak against God and treat God's people very badly. But God and His people would triumph.

Right in the middle of Daniel's chaotic dream, there was suddenly order and control. God was on His throne, ready to judge with perfect power. Daniel saw seats set up for an important court meeting. God, who lives forever, came and sat on one of the seats. His clothes were white like snow, and his hair was white like soft wool. His throne looked like it was made of fire, and flames surrounded it. A bright river of fire flowed from in front of him. Thousands of angels were there, serving him, and millions stood in front of him. *pause 1 min*

The first three beasts were forced to surrender. The fourth beast was destroyed. God had won! His kingdom was coming!



Then Daniel saw someone who looked like a person, riding on the clouds of heaven. This person came to God and was given special power, glory, and a kingdom. People from every nation, speaking all kinds of languages, worshiped him. His power will last forever, and his kingdom will never be destroyed. Daniel saw the everlasting King who will rule forever, the same King whom God had promised to David. Daniel wrote, "In my vision I saw one who looked like a son of man. He was coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Eternal God. He was led right up to him. And he was given authority, glory and a kingdom" (Daniel 7:13–14). Daniel watched as people of all nations worshiped this King whose kingdom would never end.

When Daniel woke from his dream, he didn't know who this "son of man" was. He didn't know the name of a baby who would be born in Bethlehem. He didn't know the baby would grow up to call Himself the Son of Man and bring about God's kingdom. But Daniel did know that exile wasn't the end of God's big story. Daniel could live the rest of his days waiting on God and trusting an important truth: God will send an everlasting King. Do you know who the Son of Man and everlasting King is? Pause for a response. That's right—He is Jesus!

Great job on your drawings! We're going to take 5 minutes for you to share them with your small groups. Leaders, pick 2-3 kids to share!"

Put the 5 min timer up and resume when time is up..

Connecting the Wonder Truth

SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH

Pose the following question to kids to help them connect the Wonder Truth to God's big story:

"Our Wonder Truth today is **GOD WILL SEND AN EVERLASTING KING**. Where did you see our Wonder Truth in action in the story?

Allow kids to answer freely.

God promised King David that a king from his family line would rule forever (2 Samuel 7:11–13). Daniel's dream of an everlasting King who would be like a "son of man" (Daniel 7:13) showed that God had not forgotten His promise to David. Hundreds of years later, Jesus came to earth and called Himself the "Son of Man" (Matthew 25:31). Jesus is the everlasting King from Daniel's dream!"



Responding in Worship

SLIDE: RESPONDING IN WORSHIP

Talk about ways we can respond to what we are learning with next steps such as tithing, prayer, asking questions, and worship. Encourage kids to ask their SG leaders any questions they were wondering during the lesson.

***Introduce this next song and invite kids to respond and participate in worship. See the "Worship Posture Tutorial" on the RBKids Resource Page.

WORSHIP VIDEO: Angels We Have Heard (Gloria the King Has Come)



Blessing Your Kids

Speak a blessing over your kids. Use your own words. Here is an example:

May the Lord bless you and keep you this week, and may He remind you that in everything, Jesus is the everlasting King who knows you, loves you, and leads you.

