

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

- Welcome Question: What is the weirdest dream you've ever had?
- Curiosity Questions
- Discussion Questions for Younger and Older Kids
- Small Group Prayer Time
- Word of Wonder: Isaiah 9:6
- Word of Wonder Activity
- LARGE GROUP
- Responding in Worship: Imagining the King



[God With Us Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

INVITATION

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

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WONDER TRUTH: God Will Send an Everlasting King

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WORD OF WONDER: Isaiah 9:6

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.

Small Group

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

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Pre-Service Connection (15–20 min)

RESOURCES: [Coloring Page](#), whiteboard, poster paper, or butcher paper, writing utensils
Small group leaders should be seated in place in their small groups 20 minutes prior to service time. Have play stations with various board games, activities, or use games from the extra Games & Activities Guide to keep children occupied and engaged WITH you. This time is important to build relationships, welcome new kids, and keep structure in the room - you should be an active participant with them!

Learn the kids names, and make sure they all know yours too!

Warmly welcome new friends, and introduce them to your group.

Allow quieter kids who don't engage with the board games to color. Involve them in the curiosity questions.

As kids arrive..

Invite them to write/draw the answer to the Welcome Question: on the designated board:

“What is the strangest thing you have ever seen?” ” Set out sheets of paper and colored pencils.

While kids are playing in their opening activity groups..

Pose the following “I’m curious” questions. Say “I’m curious...” before each question and give kids a chance to think about and answer each one. After each question, consider having kids share their ideas with a neighbor before you call on one or two of them to share with the group.

- **Have you ever had a dream that felt real? Tell about it.**
- **If you could combine any two animals into one, which animals would you choose?**

****NEW!!** Large Group leaders will now lead an opening game or activity 10 minutes before service begins. It is very important that you are with your groups and ready to participate with them!

Small Group Begins

After the Opening Activity, Large Group Leader will begin small group time by reading the Welcome Question aloud and inviting everyone to open their Bibles and begin.

Small Group Discussion: Younger Kids 5–8 min

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid), *God's Unlikely Helpers Sheets* (1 per SG)

Show kids how to use the table of contents to find Daniel, then invite kids to turn in their Bibles to Daniel 7. Let them know that Daniel is one of the prophets in the Bible, and the book that tells his story is in the middle of the books about the prophets in the Old Testament.

Read Daniel 7:1; 9–10, and 13–14. aloud. Then discuss the following:

- What amazing things did you notice God doing in God's big story today?
- What country did Daniel live in when he had a dream about beasts and an everlasting King? Was this place close to his home or far from it?
- What did the four beasts mean in Daniel's dream?
- Who is the everlasting King God sent?
- How do you think Daniel may have felt when he had this dream?
- God defeats the beasts in Daniel's dream! How does this make you feel?
- What do kings do? How is Jesus the everlasting King in your life?

"God gave Daniel this dream to help him understand that God is in control and the true King—Jesus—will rule forever and ever! Let's take some time to pray and thank Jesus for being our King."

Prayer Time: Younger Kids

Invite kids to think about ways that Jesus has been King in their lives this past week at school, at home, or in their activities. Has Jesus helped them through something hard or encouraged them through a friend or family member? Invite kids to share some of their praises, and then take some time to pray for the group, thanking Jesus for being the everlasting King.

Make It Inclusive!

Some kids, such as those who are neurodivergent, benefit from having a list of prayer prompts. Consider listing several praises on a whiteboard or sheet of paper: *family, food to eat, a favorite sport or activity, a kind teacher at school.* Read the choices aloud and encourage the kids to choose what they will praise King Jesus for.

Small Group Discussion: Older Kids 8–10 min

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

Show kids how to use the table of contents to find Daniel, then invite kids to turn in their Bibles to Daniel 7. Let them know that Daniel is one of the prophets in the Bible, and the book that tells his story is in the middle of the books about the prophets in the Old Testament.

Turn to Page 3 of this guide and help kids understand the context of this passage.

Invite three volunteers to read three sections aloud from Daniel 7. The first volunteer can read Daniel 7:1, the second volunteer can read 7:9–10, and the third volunteer can read 7:13–14.

- What amazing things did you notice God doing in God's big story today?
- What did the four beasts in Daniel's dream represent?
- What happened in Daniel's dream that brought order and control?
- Who is the everlasting King God sent?
- What are some things that feel scary or hard in your life?
- How does it help you to know that God wins over evil?
- Where do you need to trust Jesus to be the everlasting King in your life?

"We all face hard and scary things. But God is with us, and He is King over everything! We can trust Him to help us and defeat evil because He is the everlasting King. Let's take some time to pray for God's help in our lives."

Prayer Time: Older Kids

Invite kids to share prayer requests about something challenging going on in their lives right now. After a few minutes, take some time to pray, asking God to show up as the everlasting King over all the challenges the kids are facing.

Make It Inclusive!

Some kids, such as those who are neurodivergent, benefit from having a list of prayer prompts. Consider listing on a whiteboard or sheet of paper several possible challenges they might be facing: a *hard school subject*, a *friendship*, *obeying their parents*. Read the choices aloud and let them choose what they will ask King Jesus to help them with.

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 (NIRV)

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid); *Word of Wonder Poster (1/SG)*, *Word of Wonder PreK Poster (1/Kindergarten group-optional)*

"The Word of Wonder in the Waiting for the King series is Isaiah 9:6. God promised to send an everlasting King, and He did through Jesus! Let's read the Word of Wonder together!"

Have the kids open their Bibles to Isaiah 9:6. Read through the verse several times together. Consider reading it slowly and then quickly and then with greater emphasis on all the names of Jesus as you go through the verse.

Leader Tip: For Younger Kids. This series Word of Wonder is long! Consider using the PreK Word of Wonder for Kindergarten:

A child will be born. He will be the Prince of Peace. —from Isaiah 9:6

Make It Inclusive!

Be aware of kids who are visually impaired or have reading challenges and those who are pre-readers. Allow these kids to listen while others read the verse. Then read the verse in short phrases and have everyone repeat the verse, phrase by phrase.

Gather kids to talk about these questions:

- **Which is your favorite name for Jesus in this verse and why?**
- **Why is it good news that God sent Jesus as our everlasting King?**

Word of Wonder Activity

Take some time to memorize the Word of Wonder by asking kids to demonstrate all the wonderful names of Jesus from the verse.

Invite kids to stand in a line, with an arm's length between each person.

Begin saying the verse and when you get to child, invite the first person in line to demonstrate being a child. (They might pretend to rock a baby, or point to themselves, or pretend to cry.) Then continue reciting the verse. When you get to son, the next kid in line can demonstrate, maybe by pointing to a boy in the room or pretending to look up to a dad. Then continue reciting the verse. When you get to Wonderful Advisor/Counselor, ask the next person in line to demonstrate by using her body. Maybe she will pretend to be giving advice, or she will pat someone on the shoulder. Continue reciting the verse, inviting kids to demonstrate the rest of the names mentioned—Mighty God, Father Who Lives Forever/Everlasting Father, Prince Who Brings Peace/Prince of Peace—until you've said the whole verse.

Leader Tip: If kids are having a tough time coming up with a way to represent a title for Jesus, encourage others to help them.

Arrange kids in a different order, and say the verse again, asking kids to recite along with you as they demonstrate the different names. Continue until many of the kids can recite the verse.

PAUSE for Large Group time, then continue...

Responding in Worship: Imagining the King

SUPPLIES: black construction paper (1 sheet per kid), metallic-colored crayons, paint pens (gold, silver, bronze, white, etc.) and/or bright-colored crayons or markers

RESOURCES: [Waiting for the King Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Gather kids together.

Give each of the kids a sheet of black construction paper.

"What do you notice about this paper?" Invite kids to share answers, noticing its color, shape, etc

What colors do you think will show up on this paper if we write on it? Invite kids to share their ideas.

In Daniel's dream, the beasts made the power of evil seem overwhelming. Daniel also had the dream during a time when God's people lived far from home in exile. Our black sheets of paper can represent this lonely, dark time. Hold up a black sheet of construction paper. Yet all this evil and brokenness was not going to win. Through Daniel's dream, God showed Daniel that the Son of Man was going to reign—as the One in charge—as King now and forever. God was going to send an everlasting King! And that King is Jesus.

We heard about Jesus, the everlasting King, in today's part of God's big story. When you think of the King we heard about, what do you see? Draw it on your paper." Give kids the paint pens, crayons, or markers and invite them to draw creatively on their black papers. Play songs from the [Waiting for the King Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Leader Tip: For Younger Kids. You may want to simplify this activity for younger kids by asking, "When you think of kings, what do they wear?" Or, invite them to draw a beautiful crown that an everlasting King might wear.

After a few minutes, invite some volunteers to share what they drew with everyone. **It is so amazing to know that Jesus is King and will be King forever and ever!"**