



BEHIND THE NEWS

DANIEL: A SPECIAL INVESTIGATION

FAMILY DEVOTIONS

INSTRUCTIONS

For each week we will upload three devotions that build upon and link to our Kids Alive message on Sunday. Three devotions means:

- Those who already do devotions can continue these the other half of the week;
- Those for whom devotions are possible at most every second night of the week can also be included.

The devotions will follow this format:

INTRO

A short introductory activity or discussion

RECAP

A recap of the previous devotion

READ

A short passage will be printed. This makes it less time-consuming and also excludes the need to find a bible.

EXPLORE

Some simple comprehension questions that direct our understanding of the passage

APPLY

Something we can learn from the passage and apply to our own lives

PRAY

Suggested prayer points that come from the passage

MEMORY VERSE

This is only suggested if time permits as it may be a slightly longer activity. You may design something to remember the verse or do some fun games or activities to aid in remembering the verses.

WEEK 1: October 21-27

DAY 1

INTRO:

Share with your family something that really shocked you.

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ DANIEL 1:1-7

¹In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it.²And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylonia and put in the treasure house of his god.³Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring into the king's service some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility—⁴young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians.⁵The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king's table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king's service.⁶Among those who were chosen were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.⁷The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Beltshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego.

EXPLORE:

Who defeated God's chosen king? (*Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon*)

What did he do with the things he took from God's temple? (*Put them in his god's temple*)

What did this king do to the names of some of God's people? (*Changed them*)

APPLY:

Daniel starts in a shocking way. God's chosen king is beaten, God's temple is robbed and some of God's people have their names changed to reflect the power and rule of other gods. Where is God in all this? As always he is in charge: "the Lord delivered the king of Judah into his hand". All of this happened according to God's plan!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he is in control and nothing can stop his plans. Pray that we might trust Him when shocking things take us by surprise.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine. Daniel 1:8

Cut out pictures of different types of food. Write on them the words of this week's verse and work together to put them in order.

WEEK 1: October 21-27

DAY 2

INTRO:

How do you feel about being different? When is it good to do so and when is it hard?

RECAP:

What happened to Daniel and his friends?

READ DANIEL 1:8-14

⁸But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. ⁹Now God had caused the official to show favour and compassion to Daniel, ¹⁰but the official told Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has assigned your^[s] food and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men your age? The king would then have my head because of you." ¹¹Daniel then said to the guard whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, ¹²"Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. ¹³Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see." ¹⁴So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days.

EXPLORE:

What did Daniel decide not to do? (*Defile himself with the king's food*)

How was God helping Daniel? (*He caused the man in charge to look with favour on Daniel*)

What did Daniel suggest when the person in charge expressed concerns? (*A test*)

APPLY:

There were some things Daniel had no control over: being taken to another country, having his name changed. But he wanted to be different in those things which he could. By doing this he showed that he trusted God and lived for him alone.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that Daniel had the courage and wisdom to be different from everyone else when it counted. Pray that we might follow his example and be different or holy like our Lord Jesus.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine. Daniel 1:8

Stick the different types of food from the previous devotion onto a poster and write above it the words of this week's verse.

WEEK 1: October 21-27

DAY 3

INTRO:

Tell your family about the last presentation that you had to make at work, school or perhaps even in a conversation with a friend. How did you feel it went?

RECAP:

How did Daniel want to be different?

READ DANIEL 1:15-20

¹⁵At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. ¹⁶So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead. ¹⁷To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds. ¹⁸At the end of the time set by the king to bring them into his service, the chief official presented them to Nebuchadnezzar. ¹⁹The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's service. ²⁰In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom.

EXPLORE:

What happened when the chief official presented Daniel and his friends to the king? (*No one compared to them*)

How particularly did these men stand out? (*In their knowledge, wisdom and understanding*)

Who gave them these things? (*God made them ten times better than the others*)

APPLY:

When we decide to be different for the Lord he blesses us. This may not always be obvious: Daniel's friends were different when they refused to bow down and worship an idol (Daniel 3) and were punished for it; Daniel was different when he insisted in still doing his personal devotions (Daniel 6) and this was costly for him too. Nonetheless we see here that God will ultimately always bring good out of our desire to be holy or set apart for him.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he rewards us when we live for him. Pray that we will remember this the next time we are tempted to fit in rather than to stand out for God.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine. Daniel 1:8

Present this week's verse as if you were announcing Daniel and his friends to the king.

WEEK 2: October 28-November 3

DAY 1

INTRO:

Share with your family a dream you have had recently.

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ DANIEL 2:1-3, 10-11

¹In the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his mind was troubled and he could not sleep. ²So the king summoned the magicians, enchanters, sorcerers and astrologers to tell him what he had dreamed. When they came in and stood before the king, ³he said to them, "I have had a dream that troubles me and I want to know what it means".

¹⁰The astrologers answered the king, "There is no one on earth who can do what the king asks! No king, however great and mighty, has ever asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or astrologer. ¹¹What the king asks is too difficult. No one can reveal it to the king except the gods, and they do not live among humans."

EXPLORE:

What sort of dream did the king have? (*A troubling one*)

What did the king want to know? (*What the dream meant*)

How did the king's people respond to his request to explain the dream? (*They said it can't be done and it is unfair to ask for such a thing*)

APPLY:

Generally our dreams don't mean anything. However in the book of Daniel God often used dreams to communicate to people. They couldn't work out his message however by themselves; as the king's men rightly believed only the gods understood such things! What they got wrong however is that God has come down to live amongst men in the person of Jesus. In Jesus God has clearly revealed himself and his purposes to us all.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that Jesus came to live amongst humans. Pray that when we read stories about Jesus we might see the character of God revealed clearly.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

There is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. Daniel 2:28

Make up a code to reveal this week's verse using a different font like Webdings.

WEEK 2: October 28-November 3

DAY 2

INTRO:

Pick some household items to put under a tea towel one at a time. See if your children can guess what the item is simply by its shape. Give them some basic hints if required before you reveal what the item is.

RECAP:

What did the king want his people to explain?

READ DANIEL 2:19, 26-28

¹⁹ During the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision. Then Daniel praised the God of heaven.

²⁶ The king asked Daniel (also called Belteshazzar), "Are you able to tell me what I saw in my dream and interpret it?" ²⁷ Daniel replied, "No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about, ²⁸ but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. He has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in days to come".

EXPLORE:

How did Daniel find out what the king's dream meant? (*God revealed it to him*)

What was Daniel's first response? (*To praise the God of heaven who reveals mysteries*)

What did Daniel say the dream was about? (*What will happen in days to come*)

APPLY:

God not only clearly reveals his character to us in Jesus as we saw in the previous devotion; he also reveals to us his plans for our world! It is astounding that God is pleased to 'reveal to us the mystery of his will which will be put into effect when time reaches its fulfilment: to bring all things in heaven and on earth under Christ' (Ephesians 1:9-10)!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he loves to include us in his plans. Pray that we might learn more about God's will and be pleased to live according to what pleases him.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

There is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. Daniel 2:28

Do some 'scratch art' to reveal this week's verse.



WEEK 2: October 28-November 3

DAY 3

INTRO:

How many countries with kings can your family name?

RECAP:

How did Daniel know what the king's dream meant?

READ DANIEL 2:36-40, 44-45

³⁶ "This was the dream, and now we will interpret it to the king. ³⁷ Your Majesty, you are the king of kings. The God of heaven has given you dominion and power and might and glory; ³⁸ in your hands he has placed all mankind and the beasts of the field and the birds in the sky. Wherever they live, he has made you ruler over them all. You are that head of gold. ³⁹ After you, another kingdom will arise, inferior to yours. Next, a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule over the whole earth. ⁴⁰ Finally, there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron—for iron breaks and smashes everything—and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all the others".

⁴⁴ "In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever. ⁴⁵ This is the meaning of the vision of the rock cut out of a mountain, but not by human hands—a rock that broke the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold to pieces".

EXPLORE:

How many kingdoms did King Nebuchadnezzar dream about? (*His own & then four more*)

What was different about the final kingdom? (*God would set it up to endure forever*)

* What do you think this kingdom was? (*The kingdom of God: Jesus becoming king*)

APPLY:

God revealed to this king and his people that kingdoms come and kingdoms go but the Lord will set up a kingdom that will last forever.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he has made Jesus king over every nation. Pray that those in charge of our country might come to recognise Jesus as king.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

There is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. Daniel 2:28

Use this week's verse as a basis for praise, thanking God that he has revealed to us that his Son is king over every nation.

WEEK 3: November 4-10

DAY 1

INTRO:

Brainstorm with your family as many people who rescue others as you can (e.g. surf lifesaver, police officer etc).

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ DANIEL 3:13-15

¹³Furious with rage, Nebuchadnezzar summoned Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. So these men were brought before the king, ¹⁴and Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the image of gold I have set up? ¹⁵Now when you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipe and all kinds of music, if you are ready to fall down and worship the image I made, very good. But if you do not worship it, you will be thrown immediately into a blazing furnace. Then what god will be able to rescue you from my hand?"

EXPLORE:

What had these three men done to make the king furious? (*They had not served or worshipped his gods*)

What did he say they must do when the music played? (*Worship the golden image he had made*)

Who did the king believe would be able to help them if they didn't worship the image? (*No god would be able to rescue them from the fiery furnace*)

APPLY:

The Babylonians worshipped many different gods. These gods had seemed to beat the Israelites' God when they had wrecked their temple and taken Daniel and his friends to Babylon. However we saw in our first devotion of this series that God had let these gods be victorious to punish his people. Last week we saw God was the only true God who could reveal mysteries. The king still didn't recognise God as the Almighty so his next lesson was about to begin. He would learn that the Lord God of heaven and earth was mighty to save!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he is the Lord God Almighty, king of kings and lord of lords. Pray that we will recognise that there is no sin we can commit that will separate us from God's love, for he is always able to save us!

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"No other god can save in this way." Daniel 3:29

Draw a picture of these three men before the angry king and his fiery furnace before writing this week's verse at the top of your page.

WEEK 3: November 4-10

DAY 2

INTRO:

Let each member of your family except one hold a pair of socks rolled into a ball in each hand. The person who has no socks must use a cushion to see if he/she can defend themselves as the other members try to hit them with their sock ball.

RECAP:

What did the king want Daniel's three friends to do?

READ DANIEL 3:16-18

¹⁶Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to him, "King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. ¹⁷If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty's hand. ¹⁸But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."

EXPLORE:

What did Daniel's three friends feel they did not need to do? (*Defend themselves before the king*)

What did they say God was capable of doing? (*Delivering them from the king's hand and the fiery furnace*)

What did they also say God was free to do? (*Not deliver them if he so wished*)

APPLY:

Daniel's friends showed great faith in the Lord. They defended his power AND his freedom to act according to his will. Sometimes the Lord saves his people from harm (as he does here and in Daniel 6), sometimes he doesn't (as we'll see in the later chapters of Daniel). Regardless the Lord is always able to do what he wants!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he has the power to save and the wisdom to know when to do so. Pray that we will trust him in every situation, whether or not we think he should deliver us from our concerns.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"No other god can save in this way." Daniel 3:29

Write this week's verse on different pieces of paper and then screw these up into a ball. Repeat the opening activity but this time have one of the parents in your family defend the person who cannot defend themselves.

WEEK 3: November 4-10

DAY 3

INTRO:

Have your children close their eyes and then try to identify different smells. Finish with a match; can they identify the smell of smoke?

RECAP:

What did Daniel's three friends say God could and might do?

READ DANIEL 3:26-28

²⁶Nebuchadnezzar then approached the opening of the blazing furnace and shouted, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!" So Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out of the fire, ²⁷and the satraps, prefects, governors and royal advisers crowded around them. They saw that the fire had not harmed their bodies, nor was a hair of their heads singed; their robes were not scorched, and there was no smell of fire on them. ²⁸Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and defied the king's command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God."

EXPLORE:

What effect had the fire had on the three friends? (*None: it hadn't harmed their bodies, hair or clothes; they didn't even smell of smoke!*)

Who had protected the three friends? (*God sent an angel to rescue them*)

Who did the king come to praise? (*The God of Israel*)

APPLY:

Last week we saw that the king of Babylon had learnt that God would set up a kingdom that would never end. Here the king is introduced to the Lord. He recognises his power to save but doesn't see that he needs saving yet. God has more work to do in the heart of this king!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he did not just send an angel to protect us but he sent his Son to save us from our sin. Pray that like these friends we will be willing to give up our lives rather than serve or worship any God except our own.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"No other god can save in this way." Daniel 3:29

Show that you have learnt this week's verse by miming it to the rest of your family.

WEEK 4: November 11-17

DAY 1

INTRO:

What warnings have you recently seen or received?

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ DANIEL 4:24-27

²⁴“This is the interpretation of your dream, Your Majesty, and this is the decree the Most High has issued against my lord the king: ²⁵You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like the ox and be drenched with the dew of heaven. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes. ²⁶The command to leave the stump of the tree with its roots means that your kingdom will be restored to you when you acknowledge that Heaven rules. ²⁷Therefore, Your Majesty, be pleased to accept my advice: Renounce your sins by doing what is right, and your wickedness by being kind to the oppressed. It may be that then your prosperity will continue.”

EXPLORE:

What was the king warned would happen if he didn't acknowledge God? (*He would be driven away from his people and become like an animal*)

What was the king advised to do? (*Renounce his sins by doing what is right and being kind*)

What would happen if the king acknowledged God's rule? (*His kingdom would be restored*)

APPLY:

The king of Babylon still didn't worship God. Therefore he was graciously warned to acknowledge the Lord of all or he would be punished until he did. This shows how incredibly patient God is with us all. Like the king we are given every chance to turn from our sins in order to do good and be kind.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he doesn't desire anyone perishes but he wants all people to be saved. Pray that we will be as patient as the Lord and forgive those who sin against us while being impatient with our sin, renouncing it each day.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

The Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes. Daniel 4:25

Make a crown and write on it this week's verse.

WEEK 4: November 11-17

DAY 2

INTRO:

What punishments have you recently received, seen given or given out yourself?

RECAP:

What did God warn the king of Babylon about?

READ DANIEL 4:29-33

²⁹Twelve months later, as the king was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, ³⁰he said, "Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?" ³¹Even as the words were on his lips, a voice came from heaven, "This is what is decreed for you, King Nebuchadnezzar: Your royal authority has been taken from you. ³²You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like the ox. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes." ³³Immediately what had been said about Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled.

EXPLORE:

Why did the king say he had built Babylon? (*For the glory of his majesty*)

What happened as he said this? (*While the words were on his lips his authority was taken*)

What happened after the voice spoke? (*He was immediately driven from his people to live with the wild animals*)

APPLY:

When the king ignored his warning he was immediately punished as promised. Since the Scriptures repeatedly warn us against the dangers of sin will we heed the warning or ignore them like this king?

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he warns us about the deceitfulness and danger of sin. Pray that he will strengthen us to flee from temptation and resist the evil one this week.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

The Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes. Daniel 4:25

Print out or draw a map of the world. Write over the top of it this week's verse.

WEEK 4: November 11-17

DAY 3

INTRO:

Who has praised you recently? What did they say?

RECAP:

How was the king of Babylon punished when he boasted about his power and glory?

READ DANIEL 4:34, 36-37

³⁴At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honoured and glorified him who lives forever.

³⁶At the same time that my sanity was restored, my honour and splendour were returned to me for the glory of my kingdom. My advisers and nobles sought me out, and I was restored to my throne and became even greater than before. ³⁷Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble.

EXPLORE:

What happened to Nebuchadnezzar next? (*His sanity was restored*)

What did his advisors do? (*They restored him to his throne*)

What did Nebuchadnezzar do when he regained his kingdom? (*He praised God*)

APPLY:

Nebuchadnezzar finally came to know the Lord! When the king said "everything he does is right and all his ways are just", he admitted he had done the wrong thing. He praised and exalted God because he recognized God as King above him. God is worthy of praise for his patience with us all!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he is patient with mankind, showing mercy and grace to our world despite our sin. Pray that many people in our city might come to praise the name of the Lord, being humbled by the King of Heaven as necessary.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

The Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes. Dan 4:25

Use this week's verse to pray for the prime minister and politicians of Australia.

WEEK 5: November 18-24

DAY 1

INTRO:

Sometimes when people drink they declare a toast. This means they raise their glasses and wish someone well or honour someone for something they have done. Fill some glasses and see who or what each member of your family would like to toast.



RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ DANIEL 5:1-4

¹King Belshazzar gave a great banquet for a thousand of his nobles and drank wine with them. ²While Belshazzar was drinking his wine, he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver goblets that Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken from the temple in Jerusalem, so that the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines might drink from them. ³So they brought in the gold goblets that had been taken from the temple of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines drank from them. ⁴As they drank the wine, they praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone.

EXPLORE:

Who was at the new king's banquet? (*A thousand of his nobles and his wives & concubines*)

What did they decide to drink from? (*Gold goblets previously used to drink to God's honour*)

What did they toast with these goblets? (*Their idols, gods made of created things*)

APPLY:

King Nebuchadnezzar had finally honoured God as the King of Heaven, recognising that he is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes. Then his son replaced him on the throne and honoured other gods above the Lord of all! In Romans 1:20-21 Paul says that many people in our world do the same thing: we can clearly see God's power from the world around us but we don't honour him or thank him as we should.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that his power can be seen in the created world around us. Pray that we might praise and honour him each day by giving thanks for the many good things he has given us.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting. **Daniel 5:27**

Write the words of this week's verse on pieces of paper and put them on a set of kitchen scales. Have your family sort the verse into the correct order so they can begin to learn it.

WEEK 5: November 18-24

DAY 2

INTRO:

Produce some food items from your fridge or pantry to see if your family members can correctly value them. Who got the closest to the actual cost the most often?

RECAP:

What had the new king done at his banquet to celebrate his rule?

READ DANIEL 5:17, 22-23

¹⁷Daniel answered the king, "You may keep your gifts for yourself and give your rewards to someone else. Nevertheless, I will read the writing for the king and tell him what it means".

²²"You, Belshazzar, have not humbled yourself. ²³Instead, you have set yourself up against the Lord of heaven. You had the goblets from his temple brought to you, and you and your nobles, your wives and your concubines drank wine from them. You praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or understand. But you did not honour the God who holds in his hand your life and all your ways".

EXPLORE:

What did Daniel offer to do for the king? (*Read some writing and tell him what it meant*)

What was the king's sin? (*He had not humbled himself*)

What had the king done instead? (*Set himself up against the Lord of heaven by not honouring him*)

APPLY:

Daniel was incredibly brave telling the king of Babylon, in front of one thousand nobles, that he hadn't humbled himself! He did it however because the king had failed to recognise his real value. Compared to God, who held his life in his hands, Belshazzar and his made-up gods were worth nothing. The New Testament tells us we need to be humble too; in Philippians 2:3 we are told that we need to value others above ourselves.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that Jesus is our example of humility, for he valued others more than himself. Pray that we might have the same attitude as Jesus!

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting. **Daniel 5:27**

Draw an old-fashioned set of scales and write on it this week's verse.

WEEK 5: November 18-24

DAY 3

INTRO:

Share with your family: when was the last time you were punished? What happened?

RECAP:

What had the new king of Babylon failed to do?

READ DANIEL 5:24-31

²⁴ "Therefore God sent a hand to write an inscription. ²⁵ This is the inscription that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN. ²⁶ Here is what these words mean: *Mene*: God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end. ²⁷ *Teke!*: You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting. ²⁸ *Peres*: Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians." ²⁹ Then at Belshazzar's command, Daniel was clothed in purple, a gold chain was placed around his neck, and he was proclaimed the third highest ruler in the kingdom. ³⁰ That very night however Belshazzar, king of the Babylonians, was slain, ³¹ and Darius the Mede took over the kingdom.

EXPLORE:

How did God send a message to the king of Babylon? (*A hand appeared and wrote the message*)

What did the message mean? (*The king's reign would end and be given to others*)

When did the punishment occur? (*That very night*)

APPLY:

God's punishment of Belshazzar came incredibly swiftly! We too fail to humble ourselves before the Lord (1 Peter 5:5). However we can praise the Lord for his patience with us; not only has he not punished us immediately but he sent his Son who took the punishment we deserve!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he has sent his Son to bear the punishment for our sins. Pray that we will clothe ourselves with humility before one another so that the Lord will lift us up when Christ returns.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting. **Daniel 5:27**

Perform this week's verse with actions for the rest of your family.

WEEK 6: November 25-December 1

DAY 1

INTRO:

Discuss with your family your praying habits. How often do you pray? How long do you generally spend in prayer?

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ DANIEL 6:10-14

¹⁰When Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. ¹¹Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help. ¹²So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree: "Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or human being except to you, Your Majesty, would be thrown into the lions' den?" The king answered, "The decree stands—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed." ¹³Then they said to the king, "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, Your Majesty, or to the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day." ¹⁴When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed; he was determined to rescue Daniel and made every effort until sundown to save him.

EXPLORE:

What decree had the king made? (*No one could pray to anyone but him for thirty days*)

What did Daniel do when he learned about the decree? (*Kept praying three times a day*)

What did the king do when he heard this? (*He made every effort to save Daniel*)

APPLY:

Strikingly this story tells us not that despite hearing of the decree, but when Daniel heard about it, he went and prayed. He continued his habit of praying towards Jerusalem and asking God for help, just as he had been taught to do (1 Kings 8:46-49). Where else have we to turn in times of trouble than to the Lord?

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he has heard our prayers and forgiven us through his Son. Pray that since we have such confidence to approach the heavenly throne room we will turn to him in prayer whenever we encounter difficulties of troubles.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!" **Daniel 6:16**

Draw some simple lion's faces. Write on the back of them this week's verse. Have your family arrange the verse in the correct order so that they can begin to learn it.

WEEK 6: November 25-December 1

DAY 2

INTRO:

Have you ever lost sleep because of worry or anxiety? What happened?

RECAP:

What did Daniel do when he heard about the king's decree?

READ DANIEL 6:16-22

¹⁶ The king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions' den. The king said to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!" ¹⁷ A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the rings of his nobles, so that Daniel's situation might not be changed. ¹⁸ Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night without eating and without any entertainment being brought to him. And he could not sleep. ¹⁹ At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions' den. ²⁰ When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?" ²¹ Daniel answered, "May the king live forever! ²² My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, Your Majesty."

EXPLORE:

What did the king do to make sure that Daniel's situation might not be changed? (*He put a stone over the mouth of the den and sealed it with his ring*)

Why did the king lose sleep? (*Because he was worried about Daniel*)

Why did Daniel say he had been rescued? (*Because he was innocent of sin*)

APPLY:

The king obviously cared for Daniel. This is remarkable given Darius hadn't been king for very long when this event occurred! Daniel must have had a great impact on the king in a short time. This is surely due in part to Daniel's statement that he hadn't done any wrong before the king. When we live for the Lord our holiness stands out as different!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he will ultimately rescue us if we are free from sin because of the work of his Son. Pray that we might strive to be different or holy each day this week.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!" **Daniel 6:16**

Draw a picture of the king sealing Daniel into the lion's den while he says this week's verse.

WEEK 6: November 25-December 1

DAY 3

INTRO:

Imagine you were a king of a large empire. If you wrote to everyone in your kingdom what might you ask them to do?

RECAP:

Why was Daniel rescued from the lions?

READ DANIEL 6:15-17

²⁵Then King Darius wrote to all the nations and peoples of every language in all the earth: "May you prosper greatly! ²⁶I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel. For he is the living God and he endures forever; his kingdom will not be destroyed, his dominion will never end. ²⁷He rescues and he saves; he performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions".

EXPLORE:

To whom did the king write? (*All the nations and people of every language in all the earth*)

What did the king decree? (*People must fear and reverence the Lord*)

Why did he say they should do this? (*Because God lives he will endure forever, his kingdom will not be destroyed and his rule will never end; he is able to rescue and save wonderfully*)

APPLY:

This king did not write to all the people in his kingdom to ask them to do anything! Instead, he commanded them to respect the Lord. Like Nebuchadnezzar before him, Darius came to see that the Lord God be honoured for he is like no other god.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he is able to cause anyone to come to know his power. Pray that world leaders will come to know the majesty and goodness of our Lord.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!" **Daniel 6:16**

Fold some paper in half and draw on it a praying hand, so that when you open it up you have two. Write on it this week's verse to remind you to serve the Lord continually since he has rescued us.

WEEK 7: December 2-8

DAY 1

INTRO:

Share with your family a nightmare you have had that left you feeling terrified.

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ DANIEL 7:2-7

²Daniel said: "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me were the four winds of heaven churning up the great sea. ³Four great beasts, each different from the others, came up out of the sea. ⁴The first was like a lion, and it had the wings of an eagle. I watched until its wings were torn off and it was lifted from the ground so that it stood on two feet like a human being, and the mind of a human was given to it. ⁵And there before me was a second beast, which looked like a bear. It was raised up on one of its sides, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, 'Get up and eat your fill of flesh!' ⁶After that, I looked, and there before me was another beast, one that looked like a leopard. And on its back it had four wings like those of a bird. This beast had four heads, and it was given authority to rule. ⁷After that, in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was a fourth beast—terrifying and frightening and very powerful. It had large iron teeth; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. It was different from all the former beasts, and it had ten horns."

EXPLORE:

How did Daniel's nightmare begin? (*The wind was churning up the sea*)

What happened next? (*Four strange beats came out of the sea*)

What was the fourth beast like? (*So terrifying and frightening it was difficult to describe*)

APPLY:

Daniel was greatly affected by this nightmare. Later in this chapter we read he kept focusing again on this terrifying beast (e.g. 7:19) rather than on the message God was trying to give him. How often we can do the same: we are filled with fear despite knowing that God is in charge and that he will always protect us, his people!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he is in control of all things. Pray that next time we are afraid we will trust in him and not be distracted by what is causing us fear.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

His kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. **Daniel 7:14**

Try and draw pictures of the beasts above (if it helps, throughout history the fourth beast has generally been pictured as a dragon). Write the words of this week's verse on them and then try to assemble the verse in the correct order.

WEEK 7: December 2-8

DAY 2

INTRO:

How many kings or leaders of other countries can your family name?

RECAP:

What did Daniel dream about in the previous devotion?

READ DANIEL 7:9-14

⁹“As I looked, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. ¹⁰A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.

¹¹I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire. ¹²The other beasts had been stripped of their authority, but were allowed to live for a period of time. ¹³In my vision I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. ¹⁴He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

EXPLORE:

Who was seated on the judgement throne? (*The Ancient of Days*)

What did he do to the other beastly kings? (*Stripped them of their authority, allowed them to rule for a little while, and then destroyed them*)

Who was given authority to rule for eternity? (*The Son of Man*)

APPLY:

In his vision Daniel saw that not only was God ultimately in control but that he would give all power and dominion to the Son of Man. From the New Testament we know that this is Jesus, who is worshipped by people of every language!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that we can trust him to rule over the kingdoms of this world. Pray that more and more people of every language will worship Jesus.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

His kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. **Daniel 7:14**

Design a poster of the Son of Man receiving all power and authority from the Ancient of Days. Write the words of this week's verse on it. Then destroy the beasts of the previous devotion.

WEEK 7: December 2-8

DAY 3

INTRO:

What good news have each of your family members heard this week?

RECAP:

How would the Ancient of Days respond to the beasts and the Son of Man?

READ DANIEL 7:15-17

¹⁵I, Daniel, was troubled in spirit, and the visions that passed through my mind disturbed me. ¹⁶I approached one of those standing there and asked him the meaning of all this. "So he told me and gave me the interpretation of these things: ¹⁷'The four great beasts are four kings that will rise from the earth. ¹⁸But the holy people of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever—yes, for ever and ever'.

EXPLORE:

How did Daniel feel about the visions he saw? (*Troubled and disturbed*)

Who did he ask to help him to understand what he had seen? (*One of those standing there [from the previous devotion this is someone in God's heavenly court]*)

How was Daniel's dream interpreted? (*Four kings will rise, but the people of God will live in God's kingdom forever*)

APPLY:

After troubling and disturbing visions Daniel is given good news: God's people will be victorious. When we see troubling and disturbing things happening in the world around us we too need to be reminded of the good news: Jesus is king and will take us to reign with him forever!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that we, the holy people of the Most High, will receive the kingdom and possess it forever. Pray that when it doesn't seem like this we will keep our eyes focused on this good news rather than on the troubling things happening in the world around us.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

His kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. **Daniel 7:14**

Announce this week's verse in your best newsreader voice to show that it is good news!

WEEK 8: December 9-15

DAY 1

INTRO:

Think about the last time you saw some violence. How did it make you feel?

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ DANIEL 8:1-7

¹In the third year of King Belshazzar's reign, I, Daniel, had a vision, after the one that had already appeared to me. ²In my vision I saw myself in the citadel of Susa in the province of Elam; in the vision I was beside the Ulai Canal. ³I looked up, and there before me was a ram with two horns, standing beside the canal, and the horns were long. One of the horns was longer than the other but grew up later. ⁴I watched the ram as it charged toward the west and the north and the south. No animal could stand against it, and none could rescue from its power. It did as it pleased and became great. ⁵As I was thinking about this, suddenly a goat with a prominent horn between its eyes came from the west, crossing the whole earth without touching the ground. ⁶It came toward the two-horned ram I had seen standing beside the canal and charged at it in great rage. ⁷I saw it attack the ram furiously, striking the ram and shattering its two horns. The ram was powerless to stand against it; the goat knocked it to the ground.

EXPLORE:

What happened to Daniel in the third year of the king's reign? (*He saw a vision*)

What was the ram in the vision doing? (*Charging around; nothing could stand against it*)

What happened to the ram? (*A goat charged the ram and knocked it down*)

APPLY:

Daniel's vision was quite violent, so much so that later in the chapter we are told he was appalled by it (v27). Quite often we see violence on tv, around the world or even in our daily lives and are unaffected by it. Pray that we are moved to compassion instead!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he is upset by humanity's violence and will end it one day. Pray that we too be upset by violence, and oppose it rather than use it to retaliate.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

He will be destroyed, but not by human power. Daniel 8:25

Use cotton wool to make a ram and a goat. Write above it this week's verse so you can begin to learn it.

WEEK 8: December 9-15

DAY 2

INTRO:

Work together as a family to see: how many things around your house you can think of that run on some type of power?

RECAP:

What violence did Daniel see in his next vision?

READ DANIEL 8:8-12

⁸The goat became very great, but at the height of its power the large horn was broken off, and in its place four prominent horns grew up toward the four winds of heaven. ⁹Out of one of them came another horn, which started small but grew in power to the south and to the east and toward the Beautiful Land. ¹⁰It grew until it reached the host of the heavens, and it threw some of the starry host down to the earth and trampled on them. ¹¹It set itself up to be as great as the commander of the army of the LORD; it took away the daily sacrifice from the LORD, and his sanctuary was thrown down. ¹²Because of rebellion, the LORD's people and the daily sacrifice were given over to it. It prospered in everything it did, and truth was thrown to the ground.

EXPLORE:

What happened to the goat's horns? (*Its large horn was broken off and four other horns grew. One more small horn grew from these and became powerful*)

What terrible things did this horn do? (*It set itself up to be great by taking away the daily sacrifice, throwing down God's temple, and persecuting the people of God*)

Why did these things happen? (*Because of rebellion*)

APPLY:

When we think of power we might think of electrical power, or something big and strong. In this vision Daniel pictured a horn that grew so that it could take on God and his people! God told Daniel this so that his people would be prepared for when these awful things happened.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he prepares us for bad times ahead by warning us. Pray that unlike this horn we might use any power we have to help others.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

He will be destroyed, but not by human power. Daniel 8:25

Gather together some kitchen appliances that run on electrical power. Write on some sticky notes the words of this week's verse and stick them onto the appliances. Work together as a family to unjumble the words of the verse.

WEEK 8: December 9-15

DAY 3

INTRO:

Share with your family: what is your favourite time in history? Is there a particular period that you love to hear about (e.g. Vikings? Middle Ages etc)?

RECAP:

How did the horn that Daniel saw in the vision treat God's people?

READ DANIEL 8:15, 19-24

¹⁵While I, Daniel, was watching the vision and trying to understand it, there before me stood one who looked like a man.

¹⁹He said: "I am going to tell you what will happen later in the time of wrath, because the vision concerns the appointed time of the end.²⁰The two-horned ram that you saw represents the kings of Media and Persia. ²¹The shaggy goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between its eyes is the first king. ²²The four horns that replaced the one that was broken off represent four kingdoms that will emerge from his nation but will not have the same power. ²³In the latter part of their reign, when rebels have become completely wicked, a fierce-looking king, a master of intrigue, will arise. ²⁴He will become very strong, but not by his own power. He will cause astounding devastation and will succeed in whatever he does. He will destroy those who are mighty, the holy people.

EXPLORE:

When was Daniel told his vision would happen? (*In the time of wrath, the time of the end*)

Who did the ram and goat represent? (*The kings of Media & Persia, the king of Greece*)

What would the last king do? (*He would cause devastation to God's people*)

APPLY:

Daniel's vision concerned a time that would certainly not be his favourite period of history! Nonetheless as Lord of history God had appointed these things to happen. Similarly for us living in the time of the end is not always enjoyable for us; we live in a time of earthquakes, war and people who still want to destroy God's people. Praise the Lord that he is in control!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that nothing takes him by surprise but that all history is in his hands. Pray that we will trust God despite what we hear about in the news each day.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

He will be destroyed, but not by human power. Daniel 8:25

Use this week's verse as a prayer, thanking God that he will destroy human powers that stand against his purposes.

WEEK 9: December 16-22

DAY 1

INTRO:

Imagine there was a fire, a robber or someone badly hurt in your house. If you rang for the fire truck, police or ambulance discuss how quickly you would want them to arrive.

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ DANIEL 9:1-4

¹In the first year of Darius son of Xerxes (a Mede by descent), who was made ruler over the Babylonian kingdom—²in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. ³So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes. ⁴I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed.

EXPLORE:

From where did Daniel get his understanding? (*From the Scriptures, specifically Jeremiah*)

What did he come to understand? (*That Jerusalem's destruction would last seventy years*)

What was Daniel's immediate response? (*To pray to God*)

APPLY:

Imagine if we as God's people were as quick to respond as Daniel! Upon understanding something from the bible he immediately began to not just pray but to plead or beg with God about what he had understood. How often do we read or hear God's word and not seek to understand it? Worse still, how often do you understand God's word and not do anything about it?

PRAY:

Thank God that he has given us his word and that he enables us to understand it. Pray that he will also give us the desire to respond rightly and immediately to it by asking him to help us live our lives according to what we've understood.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition. Daniel 9:3

Draw a picture of either a fire truck, police car or ambulance. On the picture add this week's verse to remind you how we need to immediately respond to God's word.

WEEK 9: December 16-22

DAY 2

INTRO:

Share with your family an encouraging answer to prayer you have recently experienced.

RECAP:

How did Daniel respond to God's word?

READ DANIEL 9:20-23

²⁰ While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request to the LORD my God for his holy hill—²¹ while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. ²² He instructed me and said to me, "Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding. ²³ As soon as you began to pray, a word went out, which I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed."

EXPLORE:

When did Gabriel come to Daniel? (*While he was still in prayer*)

Why did he come? (*To give Daniel more insight and understanding*)

When was he sent? (*As soon as Daniel began to pray*)

APPLY:

We can often forget what an amazing thing it is that the God of all the universe listens to our prayers. More than that, the fact that he responds is incredible! In this story Daniel prays and it almost seems like God rushes to answer his prayer!

PRAY:

Praise God that he listens to us, despite the fact that we so often turn away from him. Pray that whether our answers to prayer are swift or long in coming, we will trust God to answer.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition. Daniel 9:3

Use this week's verse in your prayers to praise God that he listens to and answers prayer.

WEEK 9: December 16-22

DAY 3

INTRO:

Get your children to name their immediate family members. Then keep extending their family so they name grandparents, uncles & aunties, cousins etc... keep going until you or they run out of names!

RECAP:

Why did Gabriel come to Daniel?

READ DANIEL 9:23-24

²³ "Therefore, consider the word and understand the vision: ²⁴"Seventy 'sevens' are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the Most Holy Place."

EXPLORE:

How long did Gabriel say was set for God's people? (*Seventy 'sevens'*)

What negative things would finish in this time? (*Transgression, sin and wickedness*)

What positive things would happen during this time? (*Everlasting righteousness would arrive, vision & prophecy would be sealed up and the Most Holy Place would be anointed*)

APPLY:

Daniel had understood from Scripture that after seventy years his people would return from exile. However Gabriel was sent to Daniel to help him understand that this time would be extended and thus be longer than Daniel thought. While God would still bring his people back from exile after seventy years, in the longer term he was planning something even bigger and better that would bring everlasting righteousness... no less than sending his Son to put an end to sin and to atone for wickedness once and for all!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he sent his Son to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness and to bring in everlasting righteousness. Pray that we might be patient and wait on the Lord's timing, for his plans are always greater than we might expect!

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition. Daniel 9:3

Pass on this week's verse to each person in your family by saying one word at a time until the entire verse has been said.

WEEK 10: December 23-29

DAY 1

INTRO:

How does the thought of war make you feel?

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ DANIEL 10:1-3

¹In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar). Its message was true and it concerned a great war. The understanding of the message came to him in a vision. ²At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. ³I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips.

EXPLORE:

When did Daniel receive his final vision? (*In the third year of Cyrus*)

What was it about? (*A great war*)

How did Daniel react to the vision? (*He mourned afterwards for three weeks*)

APPLY:

Daniel's final vision was even more disturbing than his previous ones! This vision and the message given to him take up the last three chapters of the book. The incredible details of wars three hundred years in the future left Daniel unable to eat for three whole weeks. However God wanted him to focus upon how his people should act in such a time, and so it is to this that we will turn next.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he knows and controls the details of our daily lives. Pray that this might give us courage to live by faith rather than be paralysed by fear.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Those who are wise will shine like the stars. Daniel 12:3

Make lots of little stars and write on them the words of this week's verse. Have your family assemble the Verse in the correct order so that they can begin to learn it.

WEEK 10: December 23-29

DAY 2

INTRO:

Have you ever been to a look-out? What was the most memorable one each member of your family can recall? How far could you see at that look-out?

RECAP:

What was Daniel's final vision about?

READ DANIEL 12:1-4

¹"At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered. ²Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. ³Those who are wise will shine like the stars of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever. ⁴But you, Daniel, roll up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end."

EXPLORE:

What was Daniel told would happen 'at that time'? (*Daniel's people would be delivered*)

Who would shine like stars then? (*The wise; everyone who had led others to righteousness*)

What did Daniel have to do until that time? (*Roll up and seal (or put away) the words he had been given*)

APPLY:

Amazingly God gave to Daniel not just insight into the future but a vision of the very end of our world: the 'time of the end' when we would be raised to eternal life. Even back in Daniel's time God knew what he would accomplish for all of his people in the Lord Jesus!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that that he showed Daniel the glorious future that awaits us all in his Son. Pray that He will help us be wise and lead many to righteousness so that they might join in this future with us too!

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Those who are wise will shine like the stars. Daniel 12:3

Design a Christmas star and write on it this week's verse. Hang it somewhere around your house, not only to celebrate the season, but also so you can continue to learn the Verse.

WEEK 10: December 23-29

DAY 3

INTRO:

Share with your family something that you don't really understand, whether it be maths, science, art or even a person!

RECAP:

How far into the future did God show Daniel?

READ DANIEL 12:5-9

⁵Then I, Daniel, looked, and there before me stood two others, one on this bank of the river and one on the opposite bank. ⁶One of them said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, "How long will it be before these astonishing things are fulfilled?" ⁷The man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, lifted his right hand and his left hand toward heaven, and I heard him swear by him who lives forever, saying, "It will be for a time, times and half a time. When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed." ⁸I heard, but I did not understand. So I asked, "My lord, what will the outcome of all this be?" ⁹He replied, "Go your way, Daniel, because the words are rolled up and sealed until the time of the end."

EXPLORE:

How long did one of the men say it would take until these things were fulfilled? (*A time, times, and half a time*)

Because he didn't understand what did Daniel ask? (*What will be the outcome of all of this?*)

What was Daniel told to do? (*Continue along his way*)

APPLY:

Some of the things in *Daniel* may have been hard to understand for your family. Daniel himself thought so! However the ultimate message of the book is revealed here: we too need to simply go our way, trusting in the Lord to achieve his plans. He is in control, so we can leave things that are too hard for us to understand safely in his hands!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he will fulfil his promises and bring about his plans. Pray that we will trust him in this, and go about our way each day in faith.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Those who are wise will shine like the stars. Daniel 12:3

Show that you are wise by living according to this week's verse as you go your way trusting in the Lord's promises!

WEEK 11: December 30-January 5

DAYS 1-3

PRAY:

- Thank our Heavenly Father for Christmas. Praise him that he sent his Son to end sin and rule forever as he promised Daniel five hundred years before it happened!
- Thank our Heavenly Father for the year that has been. Praise God not only for the recent events of Christmas but for all the good things with which he blessed your family in 2018.
- Finally pray for the year to come. As we've seen in *Daniel* nations, people and all the details of life are in the Lord's hands. Pray that the Lord will continue to fulfil his promises to his people in 2019!



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