

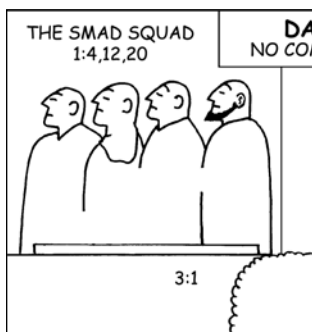
DANIEL

No Compromise

Orientation: (Write: Title & subtitle in box provided on Student Sheet)

When Jerusalem finally fell to Babylonian invaders in 586, the Temple was stripped of its gold and silver and, along with the rest of the city, was burned. The sacred utensils were carried to Babylon and used in worship to heathen gods. Daniel and his friends, being of noble birth, were deported to the palace to be used in the king's service. Nebuchadnezzar, king of the powerful Babylonian empire, selected these four promising teenagers from among the captives and renamed them: Shadrach, Meshach, Abed-Nego and Belteshazzar (Daniel). Daniel's Babylonian name is not used in the book or this lesson. These four courageous men invaded one of the darkest and most corrupt societies in the world with the light of God. They proved, over and over, the absolute superiority of God's love and power over the "gods" of the pagan world. The first part of Daniel is historical in nature, describing the tenuous, sometimes dangerous, life in the king's quarters. The latter part of the book is filled with vivid, sometimes spectacular, prophecies. Daniel, often referred to as a companion to Revelation, speaks more than the other prophets about end-times.

NOTES:



A. The "SMAD Squad." (Draw: framework on page with 9 sections)

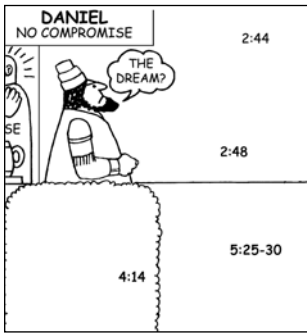
1. (Draw: 4 figures. Write: "The SMAD Squad. Read: 1:4) Shadrach, Meshach, Abed-Nego and Daniel were, in a sense, a special invasion team...the "SMAD Squad." The SMAD squad was impressive. The young men were good-looking, wise, gifted and quick. The king, realizing their potential, arranged special training in Babylonian language and literature, attempting to retrain their minds for the pagan culture.

2. (Draw: table & food) The king appointed special "delicacies" from his table for these young men, which included wine, food (most likely) sacrificed to idols and meat not properly drained of blood. In addition to the food being basically unhealthy and forbidden under Jewish law, delicacies from the king's table represented another invitation to be like the "elite" Babylonians.

3. (Draw: hands raised in front of men. Write: "No Compromise") Daniel and his friends were under intense pressure to be like everyone else. Special determination and dedication was required to say, "No"—but "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself." Daniel asked for a diet of vegetables instead of the king's food (1:5, 8). No torture or ridicule could make them compromise their unbending loyalty to God.

4. (Draw: light beams from squad's heads) The overseer was concerned about their health (and his) should they begin to show signs of malnutrition (1:10). Daniel asked for a 10-day trial period, and at the end of that time, the "SMAD Squad" was more healthy than all their contemporaries. God also "gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom." He gave Daniel special understanding regarding visions and dreams (1:17). Nebuchadnezzar's official evaluation revealed that the SMAD Squad was ten times wiser than all of his magicians (1:20).





B. Daniel's First Post Graduate Test.

1. **(Draw: box, king & balloon. Write: "The Dream?")** One night the king had a dream. The next morning, he not only could not remember details, he could not even remember what the dream was about. However, he sensed its importance, because his "spirit was anxious to know the dream" (2:3).

2. **(Draw: wizard)** The king calls his magicians, sorcerers and astrologers, this time not just for an interpretation, but to recall the dream itself. The magic men were insulted. They said, "There is not a man on earth who could do this, and no king has ever asked such a thing of our office" (2:10).

3. **(Draw: knife in king's hand)** The king said, "That may be so, but you will tell me or lose your head. Quit stalling." But the "wise men" would not, because they could not, budge. They said, "There is no other who can tell it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh."

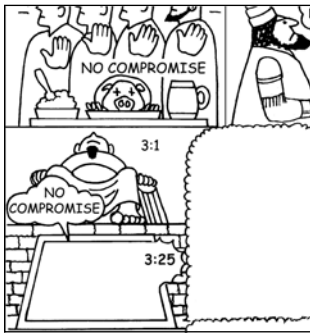
4. **(Draw: Daniel)** Orders are issued to execute all of the "wise men" in Babylon, including Daniel and his friends (2:13). Daniel boldly asked the king for time, then quickly assembled the "SMAD Squad" for prayer. God gives the answer, and Daniel is very careful to immediately give God thanks (Read: 2:19-23).

5. **(Draw: balloon with crown, mountain & rubble)** Daniel explains to the king that the dream portrays a great statue with a gold head, silver chest and arms, and having a bronze belly and thighs, legs of iron and feet of clay. A separate uncarved rock shatters the statue, grinds it to dust and scatters it to the four winds (2:31-35).

6. **(Write: "N" on crown.)** Daniel continues, "You, king, are a king of kings, the head of gold. God has given you dominion to rule over all" (2:36-38). Daniel tells Nebuchadnezzar of other kingdoms that would arise, each replacing the other. "The God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed. It will consume all other kingdoms and stand forever" (2:44). Daniel concludes by telling the king that it is God Who has made this known; therefore, it WILL come to pass.

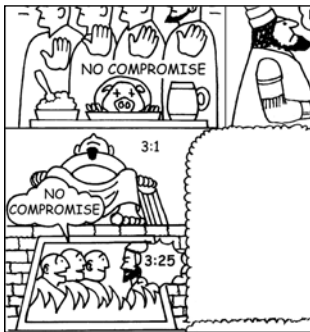
7. **(Draw: star on Daniel)** Nebuchadnezzar, once again impressed with Daniel, gives him gifts and promotes him to ruler over the whole province of Babylon. He makes him "chief magician" (4:9), which must have been a special challenge for this man of God. The king also was very impressed with himself, perhaps remembering only, from Daniel's interpretation, that he (Nebuchadnezzar) was the "king of kings."





C. A Monument to Me. (Draw: statue) The king builds a 90-foot golden image of himself (3:1). He commands all of his subjects throughout all his kingdom, at a given signal, to bow down and worship the image. Those who refuse are to be thrown into a fiery furnace (3:6).

1. **(Draw: balloon. Write: “No Compromise”)** Predictably, the “SMAD Squad” will not bow to the image, and they are promptly reported to the king. “These Jews,” the king is told, “are insulting you and your gods” (3:12). The king is furious. He brings Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego into his chambers and demands, “I will give you one more chance.” They reply, “Don't bother. God may or may not save us, but we aren't bowing to the image” (3:16-18).



2. **(Draw: square, fire & three men in the furnace)** The king was so angry his “face changed” (3:19). He orders the guards to heat the furnace seven times hotter than normal. The temperature is so intense that the attending guards are roasted.

3. **(Draw: Starburst & fourth man in the furnace)** Suddenly, the king leaps to his feet in utter amazement. Not only are the three men not consumed, there are now four men in the fire, one “like the Son of God!” (3:25) which is, of course, a reference to Jesus. The king, demonstrating once again his ridiculous extremes, publishes a decree proclaiming, “Those who refuse to worship the God of the SMAD Squad will be cut into pieces and their houses burned to the ground.” His conclusion is correct: “There is no other God who can deliver like this” (3:29).



D. Another Dream. The king is troubled once again by a dream he cannot remember, and once again, his magicians falter. This time the king immediately summons Daniel, “Because I know” says the king, “that the Spirit of the Holy God is in him” (4:9). Daniel interprets the dream. “Although,” he adds sadly, “King, I wish this applied to your enemies—not you” (4:19).

1. **(Draw: vision balloon & tree)** “The huge, beautiful tree which you saw in your dream is you, King,” declares Daniel. “Your strength and greatness reach the heavens! But the 'Watcher' (a holy one from heaven) says, 'Chop down the tree and destroy it. Leave the stump with the iron band’” (4:23). “Your greatness has caused great pride and God must humble you,” explains Daniel. The prophet also encourages, “If you break off your sins and show mercy to the poor, God may relent” (4:27).



2. **(Draw: figure on all fours, with grass in his mouth)** “Let him (that's you King) eat grass with the beasts of the field. You are to be humbled until you repent. But, your kingdom will be restored when you “come to know that Heaven rules” (4:26). True to Daniel's word, the king soon developed a strange form of insanity, was ousted from the throne and ate grass with beasts in the field.

3. **(Draw: balloon. Write: “I Repent”)** The king remembered Daniel's word and repented of his pride. His kingdom was restored and by God's grace, this heathen king winds up worshiping the true King! (4:37) Eventually Nebuchadnezzar dies, and his son Belshazzar reigns in his place. Unfortunately, the new king did not learn the valuable lesson of humility from his dad.



E. New King, New Dreams.

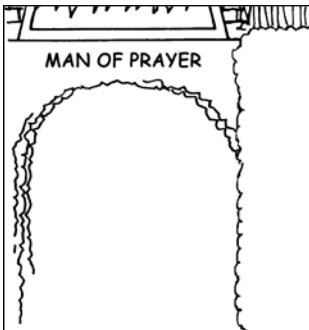
1. **(Draw: king)** Barely in office, the new, young, party-loving king throws a celebration for 1,000 of his war lords (5:1). Some historians believe that even as Belshazzar was boasting in his pride of kingdom, the Medes were surrounding his city. Wine flows freely, and the party gets wild. In this drunken state, the immature king makes a serious mistake.

2. **(Draw: fancy mug in king's hand)** A servant is sent to bring the gold and silver drinking vessels which were confiscated by his father when the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed. Belshazzar and his guests begin to drink from the sacred vessels. Not only that, but they begin to worship their heathen gods while using the consecrated vessels. It is the “last straw” with God.



3. **(Draw: hand holding pencil)** The party stops when a hand, without a body, appears and begins to write strange words on the wall. The king is terrified (“the joints of his hips were loosened and his knees knocked against each other”—5:6). When the court's magicians are unable to interpret the vision, someone in the group remembers Daniel. The 90-year-old prophet is brought before the king and is offered gifts and a promotion if he can give meaning to the vision.

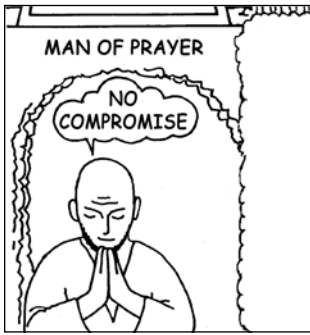
4. **(Write: “Mene...you're dead”)** “Keep your gifts,” says Daniel. “The message is from God. He gave your father a great kingdom; unfortunately, he did not acknowledge God's sovereignty so God removed him from the throne. But your dad repented, and the kingdom was restored to him. You knew all of that, young king, yet you were filled with pride and have violated the sacred vessels from God's Temple. For that, you have been weighed in the balances (of heaven) and found wanting. Bottom line: you're a dead man, king!” (5:17-27)



5. **(Read: 5:30-31)** That night the Persians blocked the Euphrates River, came up the dry river bed and captured Babylon without a fight. Belshazzar was executed and his kingdom given to the invaders.

F. New Kingdom, New King, New Threat. It did not take Darius, the new king of Persia, long to recognize Daniel's exceptional wisdom and leadership capabilities. He immediately makes the aged man governor over one-third of his kingdom.

1. **(Draw: cave. Write: “Man of Prayer”)** Jealousy among Daniel's colleagues and subordinates develops, and they devise a plot to remove Daniel, permanently. They place a document before the king, a decree requiring his signature, which reads: “Anyone who petitions another god or man shall be cast to the lions” (6:7). They know, of course, of Daniel's three-times-a-day prayer habit and that this edict effectively signs his death warrant.



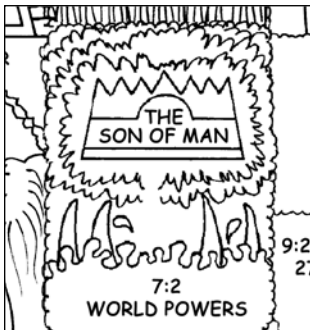
2. **(Draw: Daniel praying & balloon. Write: “No Compromise”)** Daniel reads the decree, opens his windows facing the city, kneels down and begins to pray. He will not be intimidated, nor will he compromise his devotions. Caught in the act of “petitioning another god,” Daniel is arrested and brought before the king. The king was “greatly displeased with himself” (6:14). He likes Daniel, but he is trapped by his own decree. Daniel's enemies grab the prophet and throw him to the lions.



3. **(Draw: lion licking Daniel's head)** The troubled king fasted that night and Daniel kept praying. He will not compromise his faith for any man and God honors his allegiance. An angel visits Daniel that night and shuts the lion's mouth (6:22). When the door is opened the next morning, the king is “exceedingly glad” that his friend is still alive. In his anger for being tricked, the king throws Daniel's enemies into the cave and the hungry lions devour their bodies in mid-air. Once again, a heathen king honors Daniel and his God (6:26-27).

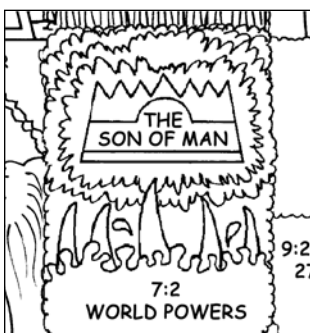
G. Daniel's Visions. Daniel's visions describe the strong, evil forces emerging in the last days which appear to be so powerful that they interfere with God's purposes. BUT—God reigns, and His mighty arm gains the ultimate victory for Him and His people. Being apocalyptic in nature, the visions are very difficult to interpret, describe or draw. We will illustrate only a few of them.

H. The Four Beasts & The Son of Man

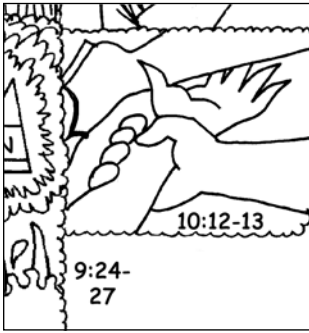


1. **(Draw: water & four of the horns protruding. Write: “World Powers”)** Daniel sees a vision which includes four beasts rising out of the Great Sea. The last beast has 10 horns, iron teeth and is “exceedingly” strong (7:7). Horns are often used in the Bible as symbols of strength.

2. **(Draw: Crown with “exploding marks”. Label: “The Son of Man”)** As Daniel continues to watch, the “beast” is slain and thrown into the lake of fire (7:11). “One like the Son of Man” (whom we know to be Jesus) descends and, given all authority and dominion, He destroys the horns and establishes His “Forever Kingdom” (7:13-14, 27). An explanation of the vision is given to Daniel by an attending angel: the beasts with horns (ruling powers) are future kingdoms on earth (possibly Babylon, Persia, Greek and Rome) which will, in turn, rise and fall (7:17). The King of Kings will reign supreme!



3. **(Draw: large horn in middle of others)** Daniel sees a ram and a goat with horns in a terrible conflict. The ram overpowers, but the goat breaks the ram's horn and tramples him to death (8:7). The goat grew more horns and, out of the middle of these horns, a small horn begins to grow (8:11, 23-25). The words “he exalted himself as high as the Prince of the Hosts” could indicate that this horn represents the antichrist in the last days. His power and destruction is predicted (8:24-25).



I. The Power of Intercession. Although Daniel's life in exile has been in a palace, his heart has never left his homeland or his people. For three weeks, Daniel fervently intercedes with prayers and fasting asking God, “How long?” As a true intercessor, he identifies with the sins of his people, repenting and pleading for God's mercy (5:19, 9:3-6, 15).

1. **(Draw: foot & hands)** As a result of Daniel's intercession, God sends Gabriel to answer him. God's angel, however, is stopped by the prince, or overseer, of Persia. The mighty Michael is sent to assist Gabriel. God wanted Daniel (and us) to know that he hears us when we first offer our prayers (9:21, 23, 10:11-12).

2. **(Read: 10:13)** The battle between good and evil wages on. Just as Michael was hindered by the prince of Persia from delivering God's answer to Daniel, answers to our prayers can be delayed by our enemy. But God wins—every time. Gabriel breaks through and touches Daniel assuring him with the words, “Do not fear. Be strong” (10:10).

J. Daniel's final vision.

1. **(Draw: large number “70” with one “clock hand”. Write: “Weeks” & “Years”)** One of the reasons for Daniel's fervent intercession is to ask God to shorten the days of captivity. God sends an angel to tell this “greatly beloved” man that, with the destruction of God's enemies, there will come good times. Most likely, the “weeks” and “years” refer to periods of time—time which marks the beginning of Jerusalem's reconstruction and the coming of the Messiah. (Some Bible scholars feel that Daniel 12:4 refers to increased travel and technology in the last days).

2. **(Write: “Rise to Your Reward”)** The last chapter of Daniel describes “The Tribulation” during the end times when “all of these things will be finished” (12:7). Daniel, the prophet who is accustomed to understanding visions, does not fully comprehend this one. He asks, “When? How shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?” (12:6). The angel responds, “That information is sealed. Go your way. You will rest, and when you wake, you will have your inheritance!” (12:13)

Applications for life:

1. Most of us are not likely to “counsel” world leaders as Daniel did. What is our important responsibility to all of those in authority according to I Tim. 2:2?
2. God gave many gifts to the “SMAD Squad.” What are some of the gifts that He gives today? (Rom. 12:6, I Cor. 12:4, Eph. 4:8)
3. What lessons do we receive from the fourth man in the fire?
4. What was a valuable lesson Nebuchadnezzar learned?
5. From Chapters 9 and 10, we learn that answers to our prayers can be hindered by demonic princes assigned over specific territories. (Look also at Eph. 6:12) Do you ever feel like the answers to your prayers are hindered? What should we do when that happens?
6. Dan. 12:12 says, “Blessed is he who...” does what?
7. What have you learned personally from the “SMAD Squad”?

IMPLANT THE WORD! Draw a picture to memorize: Daniel 11:32*

***The legacy of the “SMAD Squad.”** The SMAD Squad was a courageous, unbending, witness for God. They were living proof that, “Those who know their God will display strength and take action.”