

## I. The Ram and Goat Vision (Daniel 8:1-27)

### A. Introduction

This chapter is not only difficult to outline but, in places, it is difficult to interpret. As such, some commentators have called it “the preacher’s nightmare.”

There is a transition in chapter 8 out of the Aramaic section (2:4b – 7:28) and into Hebrew again (chapters 8-12). The Aramaic chapters were written to describe the prophetic history of the times of the Gentiles and, in doing so, to pronounce a message of judgment concerning the defeat and final overthrow of the Gentile world powers. The Hebrew chapters were written to describe the prophetic history of Israel during the times of the Gentiles and, in doing so, to announce a message of consolation and hope concerning the future deliverance for God’s people. The final chapters of Daniel are meant to give Israel hope in the midst of their bondage and to affirm that He has not forgotten them.

But they needed to realize that, before the situation got better for Israel, it would actually get worse in a coming final holocaust, a great tribulation that they must endure under the domination of a final Gentile king. This final world ruler, this “man of sin” or Antichrist, is a major focus of this chapter. But instead of focusing specifically on the final Antichrist, he describes two individuals who would embody the spirit of Antichrist, two forerunners of the final man of sin. These two false Messiahs – described in this chapter as the “big horn” and “little horn” – would embody the character, conduct, and power of the final Antichrist.

While there would be many antichrists (1 John 4:1-3), they all point to the final false Messiah, the final Antichrist (cf. Matt 24:15; 2 Thess 2:3-4; Rev 13).

After recording his first vision in chapter 7 (a vision of 4 beasts), Daniel described his second vision in chapter 8. This vision narrows the scope and focuses in on two of the four empires described in chapter 7. Medo-Persia and Greece are the focus of this chapter.

### B. Expository Notes

#### 1. The Content of the Vision (vs. 1-14)

*Daniel 8:1-2 ~ In the third year of the reign of Belshazzar the king a vision appeared to me, Daniel, subsequent to the one which appeared to me previously. 2 I looked in the vision, and while I was looking I was in the citadel of Susa, which is in the province of Elam; and I looked in the vision and I myself was beside the Ulai Canal.*

- The time of this vision (“third year of the reign of Belshazzar”) was two years after the vision of 7:1 (“first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon”), thus 551 BC.
- Daniel would have been about 70 years old.
- Thus, this is a flashback to a time between chapters 4 and 5.

- The place of this vision is Susa/Shushan, a citadel situated on the bank of the Choaspes River, also known as Ulai (cf. vs. 16).
- In Daniel's day, Susa was not much of a city; it was just a remote village at the eastern extremity of the Babylonian empire, about 250 miles east of Babylon and 150 miles north of the Persian Gulf in what is today southwest Iran.
- But Darius the Great, in his day (522-486 BC), made it one of the capitals of the Persian Empire, the location of the winter palace for the Persian king.
- The Persian king Xerxes built a magnificent palace here which is where the events recorded in the book of Esther took place (Esth 1:2).
- Also, Nehemiah was King Artaxerxes' (son of Xerxes) cupbearer in the Susa palace in 446-445 BC (Neh 1:1).
- Archaeologists excavated this city starting in 1884 and they found some incredible archaeological treasures, including the palace and the fortress which Daniel saw in his vision, a fortress that didn't even exist when Daniel had the vision.
- One of the items uncovered there in 1901 was the Code of Hammurabi, a Babylonian law code.



- A problem involves whether Daniel was in Susa personally or simply in the vision.
- Likely, he was simply there in a vision since he would probably not have been in Susa personally while Babylon still ruled because Susa did not become a prominent city until the time of the Persians.
- Additionally, he indicated that he saw it in a vision (8:2).
- This may have been similar to how Ezekiel was transported in a vision from Babylon to the temple in Jerusalem (Ezek 8:1-3; 40:1-5).

*Daniel 8:3-4 ~ Then I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a ram which had two horns was standing in front of the canal. Now the two horns were long, but one was longer than the other, with the longer one coming up last. 4 I saw the ram butting westward, northward, and southward, and no other beasts could*

*stand before him nor was there anyone to rescue from his power, but he did as he pleased and magnified himself.*

- Daniel saw first in his vision a ram with two horns, one larger than the other with the larger one coming up later than the smaller one.
- Horns symbolized the power of nations and kings.
- In verse 20, Daniel states that this ram represents Medo-Persia: vs. 20 ~ The ram which you saw with the two horns represents the kings of Media and Persia.
- The ram symbolizes the second Gentile world power, the same empire represented by the chest/arms of silver in the statue in Daniel 2 and the bear in the vision of the 4 beasts in Daniel 7.
  
- The Medes and the Persians defeated the Babylonians and came to power as an empire in 539 BC, enduring for over 200 years until 331 BC.
- The Medes came to power first when the Persians were relatively insignificant.
- However, Cyrus, the great Persian king, succeeded in gaining control over Media in about 550 BC.
- Thus, although Persia started later than the Medes, they become the greater of the two nations (in fulfillment of 8:3; cf. Dan 7:5).
  
- In verse 4, Daniel described the power of the Medes and Persians in overthrowing the Babylonians (“westward, northward, and southward”).
- They conquered the territory of Babylon/Syria/Asia Minor to the west, Armenia and the area around the Caspian Sea to the north, and Egypt and Ethiopia to the south.
- “eastward” is omitted because that’s the direction the Medes and Persians came from (cf. Is 46:11).
  
- The fact that “no other beasts could stand before him nor was there anyone to rescue from his power, he did as he pleased and magnified himself” (vs. 4) points to Cyrus’ power.
- With an army of more than 2 million soldiers, he marched against his enemies with such great power that none could hinder him.

*Daniel 8:5-8 ~ While I was observing, behold, a male goat was coming from the west over the surface of the whole earth without touching the ground; and the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes. 6 He came up to the ram that had the two horns, which I had seen standing in front of the canal, and rushed at him in his mighty wrath. 7 I saw him come beside the ram, and he was enraged at him; and he struck the ram and shattered his two horns, and the ram had no strength to withstand him. So he hurled him to the ground and trampled on him, and there was none to rescue the ram from his power. 8 Then the male goat magnified himself exceedingly. But as soon as he was mighty, the large horn was broken; and in its place there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven.*

- Next in his vision, Daniel described the third empire, represented by a male goat.

- His readers are not left to speculate about the meaning of this goat: vs. 21 ~ The shaggy goat *represents* the kingdom of Greece, and the large horn that is between his eyes is the first king.
- The goat refers to the nation of Greece, the nation that succeeded Medo-Persia, the same nation represented by the bronze legs in the statue in Daniel 2 and the same nation represented by the leopard with wings in Daniel 7.
- The Greeks conquered the Medes-Persians in 331 BC and ruled until 146 BC.
- Daniel also states that the “large horn” is Greece’s first king (vs. 21), Alexander the Great.
- He was the “conspicuous horn” Daniel saw on the goat (vs. 5).
- That he came “over the surface of the earth without touching the ground” refers to the great speed with which he conquered the world (cf. the 4 leopard wings in 7:6 which referred to its swiftness and agility).
- He was chosen as commander of the Greek forces at age 21 and, by the time he died 12 years later, he had conquered the whole world.
- Alexander was undefeated in battle and is still considered one of history’s most successful military commanders.
- Daniel described in verses 6-7 how Alexander would conquer the Medes and Persians.
- So powerless were the Medes and Persians against Alexander that they were unable to defend themselves against him.
- He conquered them “in his mighty wrath;” the word for “wrath” comes from a root meaning “to be hot.”
- Alexander’s army was driven by “infuriated strength.”
- History records that battle between Alexander and the Medes-Persians occurred at the Granicus River in 334 BC.
- With only 35,000 men, Alexander’s forces plunged through the river and attacked Darius’ 100,000 foot soldiers and 10,000 horsemen.
- It is reported that Alexander’s army killed 20,000 Medo-Persian soldiers and lost only 100 of theirs.
- A year and a half later a battle occurred at Issus near the NE tip of the Mediterranean Sea.
- Another year and a half later, the power of Persia was finally broken at Gaugamela near Nineveh in 331 BC.
- Previously none could escape from the ram’s power (vs. 4) but now none could escape from the goat (vs. 7).
- Alexander ascended to the throne when he was 21 and he began his reign by eliminating potential rivals to his throne.

- He crossed the Hellespont (the strait between European and Asian Turkey) in 331 and conquered the Persian empire.
- He spent most of his ruling years on an unprecedented military campaign through Asia and northeast Africa and even parts of Europe.
- He founded the city of Alexandria in Egypt which was named after him.
- By the age of 30, he had created one of the largest empires of the ancient world.
- He is said to have wept while still in his 20's because there were no more lands for him to conquer.
  
- He really did rule over the whole earth and “magnified himself exceedingly” (vs. 8).
  
- But it wouldn't last (vs. 8 ~ the large horn was broken).
- Despite his greatness and military prowess, Alexander died early, at age 33.
- There have been numerous theories about his death since he fell sick after a prolonged banquet.
- Some say he was poisoned but the most common theory is that he died of typhoid fever, malaria, or some other infectious disease.
  
- The “four horns” who took his place represent 4 generals who parceled out his empire.
- Alexander left no heir to his position: His son Hercules was murdered; another son, Alexander Jr., born after Alexander's death, was also put to death at age 13 (in 310 BC).
- In the absence of Alexander's leadership, a power struggle ensued, eventually resulting in the division of his empire into 4 regions:
  - Ptolemy -- who ruled over Egypt, Palestine, Arabia (the south)
  - Seleucus --- who controlled Syria, Babylonia (the east)
  - Cassander --- who ruled over Macedonia and Greece (the west)
  - Lysimachus – who was the ruler over Thrace and Asia Minor (the north)
- Interestingly, a fifth general (Antigonus) also vied for political power in the aftermath of Alexander's death but was defeated and not included in the division of the Grecian empire.
- This demonstrates the incredible accuracy of this prophecy!
  
- The Grecian empire never recovered from the shock of Alexander's death and never regained the strength it possessed under his leadership (cf. vs. 22 ~ although not with his power).
  
- Alexander the Great, the “big horn,” serves as an illustration of the future Antichrist:
  - He came to power with great speed (vs. 5).
  - He was a great military leader and conquered the whole earth quickly (vs. 5)
  - He conquered his enemies because he was driven by wrath and rage (vs. 6-7)
  - He magnified himself in his pride and arrogance (vs. 8; cf. 7:8, 11, 20, 25; 11:36)

- He was removed from power in an untimely fashion (vs. 8)
- In some senses, then, Alexander was a forerunner to the Antichrist.

*Daniel 8:9 ~ Out of one of them came forth a rather small horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Beautiful Land.*

- In these verses, Daniel described another individual who embodied the spirit of the Antichrist, one he called the “small horn” (vs. 9)
- This “small horn” arose out of one of the 4 horns mentioned in vs. 8 (vs. 9 ~ out of one of them).
- Out of one of those – out of Seleucus, the general who governed Syria – came this little horn.
- It is from the Syrian portion of the parceled Greek empire that this second of the forerunners of Antichrist came.
- IMPORTANT: The “small horn” of Daniel 8:9 is not exactly the same as the “little horn” of Daniel 7:7-8, although one prefigures the other.
- The “little horn” of Daniel 7 emerged from fourth beast (Rome) and clearly referred to Antichrist himself.
- However, the “small horn” of Daniel 8 emerged from third empire (Greece) indicating it must refer to a separate individual.
- Also, the “little horn” of chapter 7 arose from within the 10 horns, but in chapter 8, it comes out of the 4 horns on the goat.
- Thus, these horns are not identical.
- CONCLUSION: The little horn in chapter 7 refers to Antichrist himself; whereas, the little horn in chapter 8 refers to a king who would arise from within the Greek empire who would prefigure the Antichrist.
- Thus, God told Daniel about a king who would arise almost 400 years later who would be a prefigurement of the future Antichrist.
- This individual is Antiochus Epiphanes (Antiochus IV) who ruled the Syrian division of the Greek empire as the eighth ruler of the Seleucids from 175–164 BC.
- He would be a prefigurement of the future Antichrist because he would be a great persecutor of the people of Israel.
- What Antiochus would do to the Jews in his day Antichrist will also do to them in his day.
- His exploits are described in verses 9-14.
- His beginnings would be quite insignificant (vs. 9 ~ small horn) but he would eventually become great (vs. 9 ~ grew exceedingly great).
- That’s exactly what happened 400 years later; he was not the rightful heir to the throne.
- His brother Seleucus Philopator was actually on the throne but was murdered.

- Next in line to the throne was Philopator's son Demetrius but he was held as a hostage in Rome.
- Antiochus was able to weasel his way onto the throne through flattery and bribery.
- Upon taking the throne, he gave himself the name "Epiphanes" which means "illustrious."
- Some have suggested however that "Epimanes" (madman) would have been a better title.
- He would quickly grow in strength and might (vs. 9).
- He would conquer lands to the south (Egypt), lands to the east (Armenia), and the "Beautiful Land," a reference to Israel.
- Because Palestine lay between the other two areas of his conquests, he would come to exercise full dominion over the land of the Jews.

*Daniel 8:10 ~ It grew up to the host of heaven and caused some of the host and some of the stars to fall to the earth, and it trampled them down.*

- He would accomplish his overthrow of the "Beautiful Land" in part by forcing his religious ways upon the Jews, seeking to blot out the Jewish culture and to Hellenize them.
- This would result in great persecution and much oppression against the Jewish people.
- While "stars" can refer to angels (Job 38:7; Rev 12:4), the "host of heaven" and the "stars" here likely refer to the Jewish people, as is evident from Daniel 12:3.
- Often stars are associated with the Jewish people in the OT (Gen 12:3; 15:5; 22:17; 37:9; Ex 12:41; Deut 1:10).
- He would cause some of them "to fall to earth" and be "trampled down," a reference to the fall of Daniel's people.
- Because the Jews would resist Antiochus' efforts at Hellenization, they would be made to suffer greatly for it, being killed in large numbers because of their resistance to his unfair regulations.
- "History provides the account of his devastating persecutions of God's people in Judah and Jerusalem especially from 167 to 164 BC."<sup>171</sup>
- This is born out in inter-Testamental literature:
  - 1 Maccabees 1:29-32 ~ And after two years' time the king [Antiochus] sent his chief collector of tribute into the cities of Judah; and he came into Jerusalem with a great multitude. And he spoke words of peace to them, in deceit; and they gave him credence. And he fell suddenly upon the city, and smote it very sore, and destroyed much people of Israel. And when he had taken the spoils of the city, he set it on fire, and pulled down the houses and the walls round about. And the women and the children they took captive, and took possession of the cattle.

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<sup>171</sup> Whitcomb 1985: 111.

- 1 Maccabees 1:52-61 ~ And many of the people were gathered unto them, every one that forsook the law; and they committed evils in the land, and drove the Israelites into hiding places, wherever they could find a refuge. And on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month Cheseu, in 145<sup>th</sup> year, they built an abomination of desolation upon the altar, and built altars in the cities of Judah round about. And they burnt incense at the doors of their houses, and in the streets. And having rent in pieces the books of the law which they found, they burnt them with fire. And where was found with any a book of the covenant, or if any fond pleasure in the law, the king's commandment was that they should put him to death. Thus did they according to their might unto the Israelites every month, to as many as were found in the cities. And on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of the month, they sacrificed upon the altar, which was upon the altar of burnt offering. And, according to the commandment, they put to death women that had caused their children to be circumcised. And they hanged the infants about their necks, and plundered their houses, and slew them that had circumcised them.
- He was ruthless in his oppression of the Jewish people in that, when he found a mother who circumcised a child, he slew the baby, tied it around the mother's neck, marched her to the edge of town, and threw her over a cliff to be crushed to death.
- He decreed that studying Torah, observing the Sabbath, and circumcising Jewish boys were punishable by death.
- And he murdered scores and scores of Jews, in one case killing 40,000 of them in just three days.

*Daniel 8:11 ~ It even magnified itself to be equal with the Commander of the host; and it removed the regular sacrifice from Him, and the place of His sanctuary was thrown down.*

- There are different interpretations of “the Commander of the host:”
  - Some say it refers to the high priest Onias III during the days of Israel’s suffering under Antiochus.
  - Some say that it means an angel (as in 10:13, 20).
  - Others interpret him as God Himself which is the most likely interpretation. First, the “sanctuary” mentioned in this verse is probably God’s. Second, for Antiochus to magnify himself against high priest Onias would not be worth noting. Third, Antiochus is said to oppose the “Prince of princes” (vs. 25), a phrase likely similar to “King of kings” or “Lord of lords.”
- Thus, Antiochus would make himself equal to God
- He would also attack their sacrificial system (vs. 11 ~ it removed the regular sacrifice) and their entire system of worship (vs. 11 ~ the place of His sanctuary was thrown down).
- The “daily sacrifice” refers to the burnt offering which the Jewish people offered perpetually morning and evening (cf. Ex 29:38-41; Num 28:3-8).
- This regular sacrifice would be taken away by Antiochus when he would ban all legitimate sacrifices and observance of holy days in Israel.



- He would attack their place of worship, the temple, which is exactly what happened.
  - 1 Maccabees 1:41-50 ~ And the king sent letters by messengers to Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, that they should follow the foreign customs of the land, and keep burnt offerings, and sacrifices, and drink offerings out of the sanctuary; and that they should profane Sabbaths and festival days; and pollute sanctuary and priests; build altars, and groves, and idol temples, and sacrifice swine's flesh, and unclean animals; that they should also leave their sons uncircumcised, make their souls abominable with all manner of uncleanness and profanation: to the end that they might forget the law, and change all the ordinances. And whoever would not do according to the commandment of the king, he should die.
  - 1 Maccabees 1:20-24 ~ And after that Antiochus had smitten Egypt, he returned in the 143<sup>rd</sup> year; and he went up against Israel, and he went up against Jerusalem with a great multitude. And he entered in arrogance into the sanctuary and took the golden altar, and the candlestick of light, and all the vessels, and the table of the showbread, and the pouring vessels, and the vials, and the censers of gold, and the vail, and the crowns, and the golden ornaments that were on the front of the temple; and he scaled the gold off. And he took the silver and the gold, and the precious vessels; and he took the hidden treasures which he found. And having taken it all, he departed into his land. And he made a massacre, and spoke very arrogantly.
- He desecrated and destroyed their temple by taking all the temple vessels made out of silver and gold and scraping the gold off the front of the temple.
- In his greatest act of sacrilege, he desecrated the temple by sacrificing a pig on the altar, spreading the blood of the pig all over the temple, and forcing pork down the throats of the priests.
- “In December 167 BC Antiochus committed his crowning act of sacrilege against the Jewish religion by erecting an altar to Zeus in the temple precincts and offering swine on it (cf. 1 Macc 1:37, 39, 44-47, 54, 59; 2 Macc 6:2-5).”<sup>172</sup>
- This is the “abomination that causes desolation” (Dan 11:31).
- He demanded for himself the authority and worship that belongs to God alone.
- It was during this time that Mattathias and his sons gathered loyal Jews and began to fight for independence.

*Daniel 8:12 ~ And on account of transgression the host will be given over to the horn along with the regular sacrifice; and it will fling truth to the ground and perform its will and prosper.*

- “It is possible that the ‘transgression’ refers to that of the ‘the host’ (the people of Israel). But in the light of the use of this term in verse 13, it more probably refers to the transgression committed by Antiochus. Thus, not only will the people of Israel be

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<sup>172</sup> Miller 1994: 226.

subjected to him, but also their regular sacrifices will be stopped, and the precious truths of God's revealed Word will be utterly degraded."<sup>173</sup>

- He would “fling truth to the ground” which is exactly what Antiochus Epiphanes did.
- He took God's revelation about how Israel was to worship Him and threw it to the ground as it were.
- He so despised the truth contained in God's Word that he completely rejected it and tried to substitute the false religion of Greece for the truth of God.
- Antiochus did this “by repressing the truth teachings (religion) of Yahweh and attempting to destroy the Hebrew Scriptures, which embodied the true religion. According to 1 Macc 1:56-57: ‘The books of the law which they found they tore to pieces and burned with fire. Where the book of the covenant was found in the possession of any one, or if any one adhered to the law, the decree of the king condemned him to death.’ The satanically inspired king was endeavoring to rid the world of the Word of God as tyrants have attempted to do many times since.”<sup>174</sup>

*Daniel 8:13-14 ~ Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to that particular one who was speaking, “How long will the vision about the regular sacrifice apply, while the transgression causes horror, so as to allow both the holy place and the host to be trampled?” 14 He said to me, “For 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the holy place will be properly restored.”*

- In his vision, Daniel heard two beings speaking, probably angels.
- They were talking about how long this devastation by Antiochus would last and Daniel is told that would last “2,300 evenings and mornings.”
- “Here it is demonstrated that angels are deeply interested in the affairs of God's people.”<sup>175</sup>
- It is important to remember that this is not a reference to Antichrist specifically, but rather to Antiochus Epiphanes who would prefigure Antichrist.
- Antichrist will cause Israel to suffer for 3 ½ years (Rev 12:6 ~ “1260 days”; Rev 11:2 ~ “42 months”; Dan 7:25 ~ “time, times, and half a time”).
- The persecution will be so severe during the Tribulation that it will only last 3 ½ years.
- But Antiochus would persecute Israel for a longer time, prefiguring the final persecution of Antichrist.
- Daniel learns that it will last “2300 evenings and mornings.”
- Some think that “2300 evenings and mornings” refers to 1150 days (i.e. 1150 morning and 1150 evening sacrifices equals a total of 2300).

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<sup>173</sup> Whitcomb 1985: 113.

<sup>174</sup> Miller 1994: 228.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid., 228.

- But it is best to take the “2300 evenings and mornings” as referring to 2300 days (about 6 years, 4 months) as the amount of time that Antiochus would oppress the Jews.
- This is assumed because, in the OT usage, an evening and morning specific a day (i.e. Genesis 1).
- While he is not told when that time of persecution would begin, he is told when it would end, namely when “the holy place will be properly restored” (vs. 14).
- This date is known exactly today.
- The temple was restored when Judas Maccabeus led a successful revolt (known as the Maccabean revolt) against Antiochus.
- This was a revolt by a Jewish rebel group against Antiochus and his army to stop Antiochus’ persecution of the Jewish people.
- It started when Antiochus’ soldiers came to the town of Modiin and demanded that a local leader by the name of Mattathias sacrifice a pig on a pagan altar.
- He refused and killed a Hellenistic Jew who did sacrifice the pig.
- He and his 5 sons issued a rally cry: “Whoever is for God, follow me.”
- They fled to the hills and caves in the wilderness and were joined by a ragtag army of others like them.
- Mattathias died about a year later, but his son, Judah Maccabee, led the army in guerilla warfare against Antiochus’s forces.
- Although they were armed with only spears, bows and arrows, and rocks, in three years the Maccabees were able to defeat the Syrian army and reclaim the temple.
- They entered Jerusalem in triumph and ritually cleansed the Temple, reestablishing the traditional Jewish worship practices.
- He designated a new priesthood to minister, he pulled down the pagan altar, built a new altar, replaced the temple vessels, and rededicated the temple to the sole service of the Lord.
- The dedication of the Temple occurred on Dec 25, 164 BC and became known as Hanukkah (which means “dedication”).
- Going back 2300 days from the date the temple was dedicated results in a date of September 6, 170 BC, the date when Antiochus began his persecution of the Jewish people.
- History records that Antiochus’ persecution and oppression of the Jewish people began in the year 170 BC, exactly as God said it would.
- “Something significant must have occurred at that time that marked the beginning of the persecution, and such an event did take place. In 170 BC Onias III (a former high priest) was murdered at the urging of the wicked high priest Menelaus, whom

Antiochus had appointed to that position for a bribe. From that point trouble between Antiochus's administration and the Jews began to brew."<sup>176</sup>

- Thus, the period of abominations by Antiochus that is predicted here occurred 170-164 BC.
- The point of this vision is that Antiochus Epiphanes is a type of the Antichrist, a prefigurement of what the final Antichrist will be like.
- Antichrist will do the very same thing when he comes in the future: He will set himself up as Israel's king, destroy their religious system, commit the abomination of desolation, trample down God's truth, blaspheme God's name, and set himself up as the object of worship.

## 2. The Interpretation of the Vision (vs. 15-27)

*Daniel 8:15-22 ~ When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it; and behold, standing before me was one who looked like a man. 16 And I heard the voice of a man between the banks of Ulai, and he called out and said, "Gabriel, give this man an understanding of the vision." 17 So he came near to where I was standing, and when he came I was frightened and fell on my face; but he said to me, "Son of man, understand that the vision pertains to the time of the end." 18 Now while he was talking with me, I sank into a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me and made me stand upright. 19 He said, "Behold, I am going to let you know what will occur at the final period of the indignation, for it pertains to the appointed time of the end. 20 The ram which you saw with the two horns represents the kings of Media and Persia. 21 The shaggy goat represents the kingdom of Greece, and the large horn that is between his eyes is the first king. 22 The broken horn and the four horns that arose in its place represent four kingdoms which will arise from his nation, although not with his power."*

- Daniel saw the vision but struggled to understand it so God sent him someone to help him.
- God sent him a "man" (vs. 15), *gaber* in Hebrew
- The three consonants of this word (GBR) with an "el" ending result in the name "Gabriel," who appears for the first time in the Bible in verse 16.
- He is the same one who announced the 70-week plan of God for Israel 13 years later (Dan 9:20-27).
- He is the same one who announced to Zacharias that he and Elizabeth would have a son named John the Baptist (Luke 1:19).
- He is the same one who announced to Mary that she would give birth to Jesus (Luke 1:26-38).
- Gabriel told Daniel that the vision he saw referred to "the time of the end" (vs. 17).
- This reference to the "appointed time of the end" occurs again in verse 18.
- It is mentioned again in verse 19 ("at the final period of the indignation...the appointed time of the end").
- It is also referred to as "the latter period of their rule" in verse 23.
- It is described as "many days in the future" in vs. 26.

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<sup>176</sup> Ibid., 230.

- “‘The time of the end’ is actually a technical expression that refers to the events that will accompany the second coming of Christ to destroy the kingdoms of this world and to establish His own everlasting kingdom (see the contextual use of this expression in 11:35 and 11:40).<sup>177</sup>”
- Thus, it is likely that the “end” has a double time sense to it, referring not only to the time of Antiochus but also to the time of Antichrist in the distant day.
- Incredibly, then, God gave Daniel a vision, not only of future Gentile nations, but also a glimpse into the final eschatological day.
- So, while some hold that verses 9-14 and verses 23-26 only refer to Antiochus, it is more likely that, although they do refer to Antiochus in the near fulfillment, they are also a prefigurement (or type) of Antichrist as the final fulfillment.
- Thus, the prophecy looks beyond Antiochus to a future person whom Antiochus foreshadows.
- This is easy to grasp when it is understood that Daniel 11:21-45 moves on out from Antiochus to Antichrist at verse 36 (i.e. vs. 21-35 refer to Antiochus; vs. 36-45 refer to Antichrist).
- “Thus, the chapter divides into two distinct but related sections. Verses 3-14 describe kings and events of over 2,000 years ago, between the time of Daniel and of Messiah. Verses 17-26, however, building upon the foundation pattern of the blasphemies and atrocities heaped by Antiochus Epiphanes upon the people of Israel, their sacred institutions, and their God, reach far beyond those dark times to the even worse times that Israel must face at the hand of a brilliant, clever, and far more powerful king who will be ‘insolent and skilled in intrigue’ (8:23).”<sup>178</sup>
- The meaning of the ram is given in verse 20.
- The meaning of the goat is given in verse 21-22.

*Daniel 8:23 ~ In the latter period of their rule, When the transgressors have run their course, A king will arise, Insolent and skilled in intrigue.*

- Verses 23-26 form the heart of the vision in that they prepare the people of Israel for the coming crisis.
- Again, the language of this verse points (“the latter period of their rule, when transgressors have run their course”) to Antiochus but also beyond him to Antichrist.
- “To be sure, some of these descriptive phrases do seem appropriate for Antiochus Epiphanes. However, other statements do not strictly apply to him.”<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> Whitcomb 1985: 115.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., 116.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., 117.

- He will be “insolent,” a word that means “hard, strong, or bold-faced” (i.e. “hard as nails, stone-faced), merciless.
- He will also be “skilled in intrigue,” referring to the fact that he will be intelligent and persuasive, like a master of deceit, indicating that he will be able to hide what he really means in words that throw others off-guard so he can take advantage of them.
- Such will be the case with Antichrist who will be able to offer solutions to the world’s problems.

***Daniel 8:24 ~ His power will be mighty, but not by his own power, And he will destroy to an extraordinary degree And prosper and perform his will; He will destroy mighty men and the holy people.***

- The fact that “his power will be mighty” likely means that he will be controlled and energized by another, namely Satan himself, something that will be characteristic of Antichrist (cf. 2 Thess 2:9; Rev 13:2).
- He will “destroy to an extraordinary degree,” likely meaning that he would devastate property and destroy people in order to expand his kingdom.
- This will also be trust of Antichrist (Rev 13:15; 16:13-16) of whom Antiochus is a picture.
- He will destroy the “mighty men,” that is he will be a victor over mighty or powerful people.
- Antiochus did this and so will Antichrist on a greater level.
- He will destroy “the holy people,” literally “the people of the saints.”
- These are the Jewish people who are the objects of special persecution for both Antiochus and Antichrist, who will cause a holocaust of devastation that's beyond description (Dan 7:21, 25; Rev 13:7).

***Daniel 8:25 ~ And through his shrewdness He will cause deceit to succeed by his influence; And he will magnify himself in his heart, And he will destroy many while they are at ease. He will even oppose the Prince of princes, But he will be broken without human agency.***

- He will “cause deceit to succeed.” Antiochus was known for his deceptive tactics.
- He faked his foes into the expectation of peace, caused them to drop their defenses, and then turned on them, something Antichrist will do as well (cf. Dan 9:27; 2 Thess 2:9; Rev 13:4, 14; 19:20).
- He will “magnify himself in his heart,” meaning he will be arrogant. “Antiochus was a proud, self-exalting ruler; in his own opinion he was great. Archer recounts that Antiochus’s coins were inscribe *theos epiphanes* (“God manifest”), by which the king

did not literally attribute deity to himself (he was devoted to the Greek gods) but did understand himself to be the earthly representative of deity.”<sup>180</sup>

- Antichrist also will be filled with arrogance (Dan 7:8, 11, 20, 25; 2 Thess 2:4; Rev 13:5).
- He will “oppose the Prince of princes,” namely God Himself (see vs. 11).
- Psalm 2 predicts that rulers will stand up against the Lord.
- The full and final fulfillment of this prophecy is yet future when Antichrist will blaspheme God (Dan 7:25; 2 Thess 2:4; Rev 13:5-6).
- He will also make war against Christ when He returns (Rev 19:19).
- He will be “broken without human agency,” indicating that he will meet his end without man’s involvement.
- History records that Antiochus died in Tabal in 163 BC from a disease of the bowels.
- In similar fashion, Antichrist will be broken without human agency when Christ slays the wicked with the very breath of His mouth (Is 11:4; 2 Thess 2:8; Rev 19:19-20).
- His rule will be terminated by divine judgment when Christ comes back and supernaturally destroys him at the battle of Armageddon.

*Daniel 8:26-27 ~ The vision of the evenings and mornings Which has been told is true; But keep the vision secret, For it pertains to many days in the future. 27 ~ Then I, Daniel, was exhausted and sick for days. Then I got up again and carried on the king’s business; but I was astounded at the vision, and there was none to explain it.*

- These events were “true.” Daniel was “being instructed to take measures to ensure that the vision’s contents would be available for generations in the ‘distant future.’ Antiochus IV lived almost four hundred years after Daniel. Here it should be noted that the writer claimed to be predicting the future. This future cannot be ‘true’ as Gabriel declared, unless it actually was delivered to Daniel *and written* before the events took place.”<sup>181</sup>

### C. Theology Notes

### D. Preaching Helps

#### 1. Todd’s Outline (2 messages):

The Setting of the Vision (vs 1-2)

The Contents of the Vision (vs. 3-8)

The Interpretation of the Vision (vs. 15-22)

The Little Horn of the Vision (9-14, 23-27)

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<sup>180</sup> Miller 1994: 235.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid., 236.