



# Chapter 8

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**Theme:** The vision of the ram and he goat; the meaning of the vision

## ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter contains an account of a vision seen by the prophet in the third year of the reign of Belshazzar. The prophet either was, or appeared to be, in the city of—afterward the capital of the Persian empire, in the province of Elam. To that place—then an important town—there is no improbability in supposing that he had gone, as he was then unconnected with the government, or not employed by the government Dan. 5, and as it is not unreasonable to suppose that he would be at liberty to visit other parts of the empire than Babylon. Possibly there may have been Jews at that place, and he may have gone on a visit to them. Or perhaps the scene of the vision may have been laid in Shushan, by the river Ulai, and that the prophet means to represent himself as if he had been there, and the vision had seemed to pass there before his mind. But there is no valid objection to the supposition that he was actually there; and this seems to be affirmed in Dan. 8:2.

While there, he saw a ram with two horns, one higher than the other, pushing westward, and northward, and southward, so powerful that nothing could oppose him. As he was looking on this, he saw a he-goat come from the west, bounding along, and scarcely touching the ground, with a single remarkable horn between his eyes. This he-goat attacked the ram, broke his two horns, and overcame him entirely. The he-goat became very strong, but at length the horn was broken, and there came up four in its place. From one of these there sprang up a little horn that became exceeding great and mighty, extending itself toward the south, and the east, and the pleasant land—the land of Palestine. This horn became so mighty that it seemed to attack “the host of heaven”—the stars; it cast some of them down to the ground; it magnified itself against the Prince of the host; it caused the daily sacrifice in the temple to cease, and the sanctuary of the Prince of the host was cast down.

An earnest inquiry was made by one saint to another how long this was to continue, and the answer was, unto two thousand and three hundred days, and that then the sanctuary would be cleansed. Gabriel is then sent to explain the vision to the prophet, and he announces that the ram with the two horns represented the kings of Media and Persia; the goat, the king of Greece; the great horn between his eyes, the first king; the four horns that sprang up after that was broken, the four dynasties into which the kingdom would be divided; and the little horn, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, and that would stand up against the Prince of princes, and that would ultimately be destroyed. The effect of this was, that Daniel was overcome by the vision for a certain time; afterward he revived, and attended to the business of the king, but none understood the vision.

This is one of the few prophecies in the Scriptures that are explained to the prophets themselves, and it becomes, therefore, important as a key to explain other prophecies of a similar character. Of the reference to the kingdom of Media and Persia, and to the kingdom of Greece, there is an express statement. The application of a portion of the prophecy to Alexander the Great, and to the four monarchies into which his kingdom was

divided at his death, is equally certain. And there can be as little doubt of the application of the remainder to Antiochus Epiptianes, and in this, nearly all expositors are agreed. Indeed, so striking and clear is the application to this series of historical events, that Porphyry maintained that this, as well as other portions of Daniel, were written after the events occurred. One of two things, indeed, is certain—either that this was written after the events here referred to occurred, or that Daniel was inspired. No man by any natural sagacity could have predicted these events with so much accuracy and particularity. The portion of Daniel which follows is in pure Hebrew. The portion of the book from the fourth verse of the second chapter to the end of the seventh chapter was written in Chaldee.<sup>1</sup>

### **Introduction Deffinbaugh:**

Daniel chapter 8 is a preacher's nightmare. Even noted scholars hesitate to be dogmatic in their interpretation of this chapter. Daniel himself has not the foggiest notion of the vision's meaning, even after the angel Gabriel has interpreted the vision for him.

Daniel had a reputation for being able to understand and interpret all kinds of visions and dreams (1:17; 5:11-12). He had already demonstrated his God-given skill in interpreting the two visions of Nebuchadnezzar. Yet, the vision he receives in chapter 8 leaves him physically ill. He simply cannot grasp its meaning:

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 (Daniel 8:27).

When a divinely gifted interpreter of dreams and visions cannot understand it, even with Gabriel the angel explaining this prophecy to him, what am I as a preacher to do with this text? How can I write, or stand before a congregation, and say I simply do not understand the text on which I am speaking?

Struggling with this text has been interesting. While I cannot say my agony over this passage has led to complete understanding, I may say confidently I have learned much, and you can as well. May the Spirit of God enlighten our hearts and minds to our passage, as we come recalling the words of the apostle Paul:

16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Barnes' Notes on the New Testament

<sup>2</sup> Robert Deffinbaugh, [deffinbaugh@bible.org](mailto:deffinbaugh@bible.org), Biblical Studies Press, [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org), 1995

## **Daniel 8:1**

**In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, *even unto me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first.***

[third year] would have been 551 B.C.

[a vision appeared] Many opinions. Josephus believes he was actually there. Also Keil, Rosenmuller, Bertholdt. Others: “in a vision”; Montgomery, Syriac, Vulgate, John Calvin. Cf. Ezekiel 8:3; 40:1ff to Jerusalem; Cf. Rev 17:3, John in the wilderness.

[third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me] This vision came two years later than the one in Daniel 7, giving additional information on some questions. Each vision was complete in itself, but both were helpful to an understanding of the whole truth of the future. This vision was originally recorded in Hebrew, the Aramaic section (Daniel 2:4-7:28) having been completed. The time of the vision was at the end of the reign of Belshazzar which corresponds to the time of the handwriting on the wall of Daniel 5, for he only reigned a little more than two years. If Babylon had not fallen yet, then it must be understood that Daniel was on official business in Persia (Daniel 8:2). Shushan was the chief city of Persia.<sup>3</sup>

As with Daniel 7, this chapter precedes Daniel 5 chronologically; the dream probably occurred in 551 B.C. when Daniel was about 70 years old. Daniel 7-8 correspond to the first and third years of Belshazzar and belong chronologically between Daniel 4-5. Daniel 9 took place at approximately the same time as Daniel 6. It gives us more details about the Medo-Persian and Greek empires, the two world powers that ruled after Babylonia.<sup>4</sup>

## **Daniel 8:2**

**And I saw in a vision; and it came to pass, when I saw, that I *was* at Shushan *in* the palace, which *is* in the province of Elam; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai.**

### **Shushan Palace**

- Susa, one of the Persian royal cities, was located 230 miles east of Babylon; 150 miles north of head of Persian Gulf, midway between Ecbatana and Persepolis;
- Susa was the capital of Elamites in antiquity; later the main residence of Persian kings; Famous palace begun by Darius I and later enlarged by Xerxes;
- Home of Esther (Esther 1:2,5; 2:3,5);
- City of Nehemiah (Neh 1:1);
- Code of Hammurabi found there in 1901.

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<sup>3</sup> Dake Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

<sup>4</sup> Life Application Notes

**[Elam]** The Hebrew name of a region lying east of Babylonia and extending to the mountains of Media to the northeast, and along the Persian Gulf to the borders of ancient Persis in the south. Its two divisions were Elam proper in the north and Anshan in the south, the latter being an independent kingdom until it was annexed by Persia about 600 B.C. Cyrus the Great was hereditary "Prince of Anshan." The capital of Elam was Susa or Shushan. The Elamites were from Shem (Genesis 10:22). Elam was a rival of Babylonia. They were allies for a long period due to a common enemy, the Assyrians, who under Assurbanipal conquered Elam and Babylonia about 645 B.C. Susa was taken and many Elamites and others were deported to Samaria (Ezra 4:9; 2 Kings 17:24). Upon the breaking up of the Assyrian Empire by Nebuchadnezzar and the Medes about 606 B.C., the Assyrian Empire was divided among the Medes, Lydians, and Babylonians. About 553 B.C., Cyrus the Great, king of the Persians and a subject of the Median king, revolted and captured the Median king. The Persians conquered Lydia, Babylon, and Egypt and held sway over them until Alexander the Great, about 336 B.C.<sup>5</sup>

**[river of Ulai]** The Eulaeus canal which divided Shushan from Elymais (or Susa); now called the Kerkah river.

**I saw in a vision**—Daniel was at this time in Shushan, which appears to have been a strong place, where the kings of Persia had their summer residence. It was the capital of the province of Elam or the Elymais; which province was most probably added to the Chaldean territories by Nebuchadnezzar; see Jeremiah 49:34, 35. Here was Daniel's ordinary residence; and though here at this time, he, in vision, saw himself on the banks of the river Ulai. This is the same as the river Euleus, which divided Shushan or Susiana from Elymais.<sup>6</sup>

Susa was one of the capitals of the Babylonian empire. Located in what is now Iran, Susa was a well-developed city. It was the winter capital of the Persian empire and a mighty fortress (citadel). In his vision, Daniel saw himself in this important location. The earliest known code of law, the Code of Hammurapi, was found there. Susa rivaled Babylon itself in cultural sophistication.

**That I was at Shushan**—As remarked in the introduction to this chapter, this might mean that he seemed to be there, or that the vision was represented to him as being there; but the most natural construction is to suppose that Daniel was actually there himself. Why he was there he has not informed us directly—whether he was on public business, or on his own. From Dan. 8:27, however—"Afterward I rose up, and did the king's business"—it would seem most probable that he was then in the service of the king. This supposition will not conflict with the statement in Dan. 5:10-11, in which the queen-mother, when the handwriting appeared on the wall of the palace informs Belshazzar that there was "a man in his kingdom in whom was the spirit of the holy gods, etc."—from which it might be objected that Daniel was at that time unknown to the king, and could not have been in his employ, for it might have been a fact that he was in

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<sup>5</sup> Dake Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

<sup>6</sup> Adam Clarke's Commentary

the employ of the king as an officer of the government, and yet it may have been forgotten that he had this power of disclosing the meaning of visions.

He may have been employed in the public service, but his services to the father of the king, and his extraordinary skill in interpreting dreams and visions may not at once have occurred to the affrighted monarch and his courtiers. Shushan, or Susa, the chief town of Susiana, was the capital of Persia after the time of Cyrus, in which the kings of Persia had their principal residence, Neh. 1:1; Est. 1:2-5. It was situated on the Eulaeus or Choaspes, probably on the spot now occupied by the village Shus.—Rennel, Geog. of Herodotus; Kinneir, Mem. Pers. Emp.; K. Porter's Travels, ii. 4, 11; Ritter, Erdkunde, Asien, 9: 294; Pict. Bib. *ιν λοχ*. At Shus there are extensive ruins, stretching perhaps twelve miles from one extremity to the other, and consisting, like the other ruins in that country, of hillocks of earth, and rubbish, covered with broken, pieces of brick and colored tile. At the foot of these mounds is the so-called tomb of Daniel, a small building erected on the spot where the remains of Daniel are believed in that region to rest.

It is apparently modern, but nothing but the belief that this was the site of the prophet's sepulchre could have led to its being built in the place where it stands—Malcolm, Hist. of Persia, i. 255, 256. The city of Shus is now a gloomy wilderness, inhabited by lions, hyenas, and other beasts of prey.—Kitto's Cyclo., art. "Shushan." Sir John Kinneir says that the dread of these animals compelled Mr. Monteith and himself to take shelter for the night within the walls that encompass Daniel's tomb. Of that tomb Sir John Malcolm says, "It is a small building, but sufficient to shelter some dervishes who watch the remains of the prophet, and are supported by the alms of pious pilgrims, who visit the holy sepulchre. The dervishes are now the only inhabitants of Susa; and every species of wild beast roams at large over the spot on which some of the proudest palaces ever raised by human art once stood."—Vol. i. pp. 255, 256. For a description of the ruins of Susa, see Pict. Bib. *ιν λοχ*. This city was about 450 Roman miles from Seleucia, and was built, according to Pliny, 6; 27, in a square of about 120 stadia. It was the summer residence of the Persian kings (Cyrop. 8, 6, 10), as they passed the spring in Ecbatana, and the autumn and winter in Babylon. See Lengerke, *ιν λοχ*. It was in this city that Alexander the Great married Stateira, daughter of Darius Codomanus. The name means a lily, and was probably given to it on account of its beauty—Lengerke. Rosenmüller supposes that the vision here is represented to have appeared to Daniel in this city because it would be the future capital of Persia, and because so much of the vision pertained to Persia.<sup>7</sup>

**Deffinbaugh:** Daniel had a purpose for including this information in his introduction. He wants his readers to know that the prophecy of chapter 8 must be understood in the context of the reign of Belshazzar, and particularly in light of the events described in chapter 5. Further, the prophecy of chapter 8 should be understood in relationship to the prophecy of chapter 7. Even though the prophecy of chapter 7 is written in Aramaic and

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<sup>7</sup> Barnes' Notes on the New Testament

chapter 8 in Hebrew, these two prophecies cannot be understood in isolation; they must be understood in relationship to each other.

Verse 1 tells us when Daniel received the vision and explains the relationship of the second vision to the first, recorded in chapter 7. Verse 2 is more geographical, telling us not where Daniel was when he received the vision, but where he was in the vision. His vision transported him both in time and space,<sup>8</sup> as he found himself in Susa,<sup>9</sup> about 150 miles north of the head of the Persian Gulf. Susa, the ancient capital of Elam, was destined in a few years to become a leading city in the Persian empire and the location of the king's palace (see Nehemiah 1:1; Esther 1:2, 5: 2:3, 5). The canal (or river, see marginal note in NASB) mentioned by Daniel may have been the very one down which Alexander would later sail his fleet.<sup>10</sup>

How dramatically "things to come" are communicated to the prophet Daniel. He is actually transported to the future capital of the Persian empire. There, in Susa, beside the Ulai Canal, he learns that the two kingdoms which will follow the Babylonian empire will be Medo-Persia and Greece (see verses 20-21). We might liken it to an English prophet in the sixteenth century being transported to Washington D.C. in the twenty-first century. It will be some 12 years until the death of Belshazzar and the end of the Babylonian domination of the world, but Daniel's vision takes him to the very capital of Persia where Nehemiah and Esther will later dwell.<sup>11</sup>

### **Daniel 8:3**

**Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had *two* horns: and the *two* horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last.**

#### **Thirty-sixfold Vision of the Ram and the He Goat (Dake):**

1. A ram stood by the river Ulai.
2. He had two horns.
3. The horns were high.
4. One horn was higher than the other.
5. The higher horn came up last (Daniel 8:3).
6. The ram pushed westward, northward, and southward.
7. No beast could stand before him.
8. No beast could deliver from him.
9. He did according to his will.
10. He became great (Daniel 8:4).
11. A he-goat came from the west, covering the face of the whole earth (Daniel 8:5).
12. He was going so fast he touched not the ground as he went.

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<sup>8</sup> Compare Ezekiel 8:3; 40:1-2.

<sup>9</sup> "Beginning in 1884, the site of ancient Susa, then a large mound, has been explored and has divulged many archeological treasures. The code of Hammurabi was found there in 1901. The famous palace referred to by Daniel, Esther and Nehemiah was begun by Darius I and enlarged by later kings. Remains of its magnificence can still be seen near the modern village of Shush." Walvoord, p. 181.

<sup>10</sup> See Joyce C. Baldwin, *Daniel: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1978), pp. 155-156.

<sup>11</sup> Robert Deffinbaugh, [deffinbaugh@bible.org](mailto:deffinbaugh@bible.org), Biblical Studies Press, [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org), 1995

13. He had a notable horn between his eyes.
14. He came to the two-horned ram.
15. He ran into him in the fury of his power (Daniel 8:6).
16. He was moved with anger against him.
17. He smote the ram and broke his horns.
18. There was no power in the ram to stand against the he-goat.
19. He cast the ram down to the ground and stamped upon him.
20. None could deliver the ram out of the hands of the he-goat (Daniel 8:7).
21. The he-goat became very great.
22. When he was strong the great horn between his eyes was broken.
23. In its place came up four notable horns toward the four winds of heaven (Daniel 8:8).
24. Out of one of them came forth a little horn.
25. The little horn became exceeding great toward the south, east, and the pleasant land (Daniel 8:9).
26. The little horn became great even to the host of heaven.
27. It cast down some of the host of heaven to the ground.
28. It stamped upon them (Daniel 8:10).
29. The little horn magnified himself even to the prince of the host.
30. By him the daily sacrifice was taken away.
31. The place of his sanctuary was cast down (Daniel 8:11).
32. A host was given him against the daily sacrifice because of sin abounding on every hand.
33. The little horn cast down the truth to the ground.
34. He practiced and prospered (Daniel 8:12).
35. One saint speaking to another asked, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden down (Daniel 8:13)?
36. The answer was, Unto 2,300 days (evening morning sacrifices); then shall the sanctuary be cleansed (Daniel 8:14).<sup>12</sup>

**[two horns]** The kings of Media and Persia, Darius (Daniel 5:31) and Cyrus (2 Chron. 36:22-23).

The ram with two horns is the Medo-Persian empire. The Medes were the first to arise in power, but the Persians later rose to preeminence. The empire is commonly known as the Persian empire. The symbol on coins of the Persian empire was a ram.<sup>13</sup>

**[came up last]** Referring to Cyrus the Persian who was king of the Medes and Persians after Darius the Mede. Under him and his successors Persia attained to a greater power than ever under the Medes.

“A ram which had two horns” will be identified later as Media-Persia (see v. 20)

“The higher came up last.” In other words, the horn representing Media came up first when Gobryas the Median general destroyed Babylon. Then later the Persian monarchs

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<sup>12</sup> Dake Study Notes, Dake’s Study Bible

<sup>13</sup> Chuck Smith, Sermon notes on Daniel, Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa CA

gained the ascendancy over the Medes and took the great empire to its highest peak. This ram, then, with its two horns and one horn more prominent than the other, is the Medo-Persian empire with the Persians being in the ascendancy.<sup>14</sup>

**A ram which had two horns**—There can be no error in explaining the design of this symbol, for in Dan. 8:20 it is expressly said that it denoted the two kings of Media and Persia. The united power of the kingdom was denoted by the ram itself; the fact that there were two powers or kingdoms combined, by the two horns of the ram.

**A ram which had two horns**—In the former vision there were four beasts, pointing out four empires; in this we have but two, as only two empires are concerned here, viz., the Grecian and the Persian. The Babylonish empire is not mentioned; its fate was before decided, and it was now at its close.

By the ram, the empire of the Medes and Persians was pointed out, as explained by the angel Gabriel, verse 20; and particularly Cyrus, who was the founder of that empire. Cyrus was the son of Cambyses, king of Persia; and grandson of Astyages, king of Media, by his daughter Mandane, who had been given in marriage to Cambyses. Cyrus marrying Roxana, the daughter and only child of his uncle Cyaxares, called in Scripture Ahasuerus, succeeded to both crowns, and thus united Media and Persia. A ram was the symbol of the Persians; and a ram's head with two horns, one higher than the other, appears as such in different parts of the ruins of Persepolis. See the plates of these ruins in the supplement to the seventh volume of the ancient part of the Universal History.

This ram had two horns; that is, two kingdoms, viz., Media and Persia; but one was higher than the other; and the higher came up last. Media, signified by the shorter horn, was the more ancient of the two kingdoms. Persia, the higher horn, had come up but lately, and was of little historic or political consequence till the time of Cyrus; but in the reigns of this prince and his immediate successors, Persia attained a political consequence greatly superior to that possessed at any time by the kingdom of Media; therefore, it is said to have been the higher, and to have come up last.<sup>15</sup>

The two horns were the kings of Media and Persia (Daniel 8:20). The longer horn represented the growing dominance of Persia in the Medo-Persian empire.

**But one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last**—The higher horn springing up last denotes Persia, that became the more mighty power of the two, so that the name Media became finally almost dropped, and the united kingdom was known in Grecian history as the Persian. The Median or Assyrian power was the older, but the Persian became the most mighty.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:578). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>15</sup> Adam Clarke's Commentary

<sup>16</sup> Barnes' Notes on the New Testament

## **Daniel 8:4**

**I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither *was there any* that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great.**

Two horns, but unequal—one horn was longer than the other. The horns did not arise simultaneously; the longer one arose after (grew up later than) the shorter one. The disparity between the ram's two horns recalls the bear raised up on one side (Dan 7:5). The ram that had been standing by the canal began to charge toward the W-N-S (v. 20): His charge was irresistible; none could escape his onslaught. Medo-Persia. One empire, not two.

### **The Ram**

- Ram with clean feet, sharp-pointed horns Guardian spirit of Persian kingdom [Keil].
- The Persian king, at the head of his army, wore the head of ram instead of the diadem [Ammianus Marcellinus, 4th century].
- Zodiac: Aries, the Ram = Persia.

### **Xerxes**

The last great ruler of Persia (he was king during the days of Esther). He made a foray against Europe, against Greece. But the Greeks were smart—they didn't go out to meet him. Instead, they waited until he got to Thermopylae, a narrow pass into which he could not fit a big army.

Since one Greek soldier was equal to at least ten of the MedoPersians who were not a trained and disciplined army as the Greeks were, the Greeks decimated them at Thermopylae. When word was brought to him that his fleet had been destroyed, he went down to the sea, took off his belt, and beat the waves with it—they had destroyed his fleet!<sup>17</sup>

**[westward, and northward, and southward]** The Medes and Persians conquered Lydia to the north, Babylon and other countries to the west, and Egypt to the south. Subduing all, they did according to their own will and became great.

**I saw the ram pushing westward**—The Persians, who are signified by the ram, as well as their founder Cyrus, pushed their conquests west, north and south. The principal theater of their wars, says Calmet, was against the SCYTHIANS, northward; against the GREEKS, westward; and against the EGYPTIANS, southward.

**He did according to his will**—There was no other nation at that time that could stay the progress of the Persian arms.

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<sup>17</sup> Chuck Missler, Notes on the Commentary for the Book of Daniel, khouse.org.

**Deffinbaugh:** The ram, later identified as representing the kings of Medo-Persia (verse 20), has two horns. The first horn would be Media and the second Persia, coming later than the first and being more powerful. The directions in which these kings extend their dominion is revealed in verse 4 and confirmed by history.

Verse 4 describes the power given to the ram, enabling him to dominate the nations. No beasts could withstand the ram, and no one was able to rescue peoples from him. He could do as he pleased. In the process, the kings became arrogant, magnifying themselves. These same characteristics apply both to the goat and to the horn. From the first five chapters of Daniel, we see some of the same characteristics in Nebuchadnezzar and in Belshazzar.<sup>18</sup>

### **Daniel 8:5**

**And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat *had* a notable horn between his eyes.**

**[he goat]** “buck of the goats” (v.21) from the west; a goat with a powerful single horn arose suddenly. His speed was so great that his feet did not touch the ground.

**Alexander the Great:** At the age of 20 he assumed the mantle of his father, Philip of Macedon. Six years later he had conquered the mighty Persian Empire and by the age of 30 his empire stretched from the Mediterranean to the Hindu Kush. He died at the age of 32. His legacy: a new Achilles & new world order Alexander was a visionary conqueror, a ruthless tyrant, and a brilliant military strategist and court politician.

**[he goat come from the west]** The acknowledged symbol of Greece. Caranus, the first king going with many Greeks to seek a new habitation in Macedonia, was advised by an oracle to take goats for guides. Seeing a herd fleeing from a storm, he followed them to Edessa and there built the seat of his empire. He called the place Aegea, the goats' town and the people Aegeadae, the goats' people, names derived from *αίγεις* (GSN-122), goat. He chose a goat as the emblem on his standards. Aegea was the burying place of Macedonian kings. Alexander called his son by Roxana, Alexander Aegus—Alexander the goat.

**[the whole earth]** Again we have a whole put for a part of the earth, as is the case so often when Gentile world powers are referred to (Daniel 2:38-40; Daniel 4:11-12,20-22; Daniel 7:19,23). The Antichrist's kingdom is as geographically limited as the others (see Extent of Antichrist's Reign).

**[touched not the ground]** Symbolizing the swiftness of Alexander's conquests (Daniel 8:5-6). In 13 years he conquered the whole known world.

**[horn between his eyes]** First king, Alexander the Great (Daniel 8:21).

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<sup>18</sup> Robert Deffinbaugh, deffinbaugh@bible.org, Biblical Studies Press, [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org), 1995

**Behold, a he-goat**—This was Alexander the Great; and a goat was a very proper symbol of the Grecian or Macedonian people. Bp. Newton very properly observes that, two hundred years before the time of Daniel, they were called Aegeadae, the goats' people; the origin of which name is said to be as follows: Caranus, their first king, going with a multitude of Greeks to seek a new habitation in Macedonia, was advised by an oracle to take the goats for his guides; and afterwards, seeing a herd of goats flying from a violent storm, he followed them to Edessa, and there fixed the seat of his empire, and made the goats his ensigns or standards; and called the place Aege or Aegea, the goats' town; and the people Aegeadae, the goats' people; names which are derived from áéí, áéíö, a goat. The city Aege or Aegea, was the usual burying-place of the Macedonian kings; and, in reference to this origin, Alexander called his son by Roxana, Alexander Aegus, Alexander the goat. All this shows the very great propriety of the symbol here used.<sup>19</sup>

**Came from the west**—Europe lies westward of Asia.

**On the face of the whole earth**—Carrying every thing before him.

**Touched not the ground**—Seemed to fly from conquest to conquest. By the time Alexander was thirty years of age he had conquered all Asia: and, because of the rapidity of his conquests, he is represented as a leopard with four wings, in the preceding vision.

**A notable horn between his eyes**—This, says the angel, is the first king, verse 21, that is, the first kingdom of the Greeks in Asia, which was erected by Alexander; and continued some years in his brother Philip Aridaeus, and in his two young sons, Alexander Aegus and Hercules.

**McGee:** As Daniel was marveling at the power and ability of the ram, yonder from the west came a goat with great movement and a dominant horn. The goat represents Greece (see v. 21), and the horn typifies Alexander the Great.

Under Xerxes, Persia intended to move west, but from the west came this goat which was moving so fast it “touched not the ground”—that corresponds to the four wings of the panther and denotes the speed with which Alexander moved his army.<sup>20</sup>

## **Daniel 8:6**

**And he came to the ram that had *two* horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power.**

The description of this goat is parallel to the third beast in Dan 7:6, the leopard with wings. Both were rapid, and the leopard had four heads whereas the goat had four horns.

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<sup>19</sup> Adam Clarke's Commentary

<sup>20</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:578). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

## The Goat

- A one-horned goat was a symbol for the ancient Macedonians;
- Zodiac: Persia; Aries, the Ram: Greece Capricorn, the goat (*L. caper*, goat; *cornu*, horn);
- May 334 B.C: Alexander crossed the Hellespont with 35,000 troops, first met and defeated the Persians at the Granicus River;
- Nov 333 B.C: 1½ years later, the Battle at Issus near the NE tip of Mediterranean Sea;
- Oct 331 B.C: Finally broken at Gaugamela (Arbela) near Nineveh.

**And he came to the ram**—This and the following verse give an account of the overthrow of the Persian empire by Alexander.

**And ran unto him in the fury of his power**—The conflicts between the Greeks and the Persians were excessively severe. Alexander first vanquished the generals of Darius, at the river Granicus, in Phrygia; he next attacked and totally routed Darius, at the straits of Issus, in Cilicia; and afterwards at the plains of Arbela, in Assyria. One can hardly read these words, says Bp. Newton, “the ram—which I had seen standing by the river, ran unto him in the fury of his power,” without having the image of Darius’ army standing and guarding the river Granicus and of Alexander on the other side, with his forces plunging in swimming across the stream, and rushing on the enemy, with all the fire and fury that can be conceived.<sup>21</sup>

## Daniel 8:7

**And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand.**

Previously, none could escape from the ram’s power (v. 4); now none could escape from the goat (v. 7). He was enraged (v. 6) at the Persians for having defeated the Greeks at the Battle of Marathon (490 B.C. and the Battle of Salamis (481), Greek cities near Athens. He quickly conquered Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, and Mesopotamia in a few years, beginning in 334 B.C. The greatness that had characterized the ram now belonged to the goat.

**[choler]** Hebrew: *marar* (HSN-4843), to become bitter (Daniel 8:7; Daniel 11:11). This shows the hatred of Medo-Persia by the Greeks who had been invaded by Xerxes 144 years before and the growing enmity between the two powers.

**And brake his two horns**—Subdued Persia and Media; sacked and burnt the royal city of Persepolis, the capital of the Persian empire, and, even in its ruins, one of the wonders of the world to the present day. This he did because “he was moved with choler” against Darius, who had endeavored to draw off his captains with bribes, and had labored to induce some of his friends to assassinate him. Alexander, finding this, would listen to no

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<sup>21</sup> Adam Clarke’s Commentary

proposals of peace; and was determined never to rest till he had destroyed Darius and his whole empire. In Media, Darius was seized and made prisoner by some of his own treacherous subjects, and afterwards basely murdered.

**There was no power in the ram to stand before him**—Alexander’s victories over the Persians were as easy as they were rapid and decisive.

**He cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him**—Totally destroyed the family, and overturned the whole monarchy.

The goat represented Greece, and its large horn, Alexander the Great (Daniel 8:21). This is an amazing prediction because Greece was not yet considered a world power when this prophecy was given. Alexander the Great conquered the world with great speed and military strategy, indicated by the goat’s rapid movement. Shattering both horns symbolized Alexander breaking both parts of the Medo-Persian empire.<sup>22</sup>

### **Daniel 8:8**

**Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven.**

**[the great horn was broken]** Alexander died at 32 (dissipated life, drunken debauch) at Babylon, 11 years after leaving home country. As soon as the goat was elevated to great power, his large single horn was broken off, and its place was taken by four “notable ones.” Alexander died in the height of his conquests. His natural brother, Philip Aridaeus, and his two sons, Alexander Aegus and Hercules, kept up the show and name of the Macedonian kingdom for a time; but they were all murdered within fifteen years; and thus the great horn, the Macedonian kingdom, was broken, Alexander’s family being now cut off.

**And when he was strong, the great horn was broken**—In the time, or at the period of its greatest strength. Then an event occurred which broke the horn in which was concentrated its power. It is easy to see the application of this to the Macedonian power. At no time was the empire so strong as at the death of Alexander. Its power did not pine away; it was not enfeebled, as monarchies are often, by age, and luxury, and corruption; it was most flourishing and prosperous just at the period when broken by the death of Alexander. Never afterward did it recover its vigour; never was it consolidated again. From that time this mighty empire, broken into separate kingdoms, lost its influence in the world.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Life Application Notes

<sup>23</sup> Barnes’ Notes on the New Testament

#### Four “Notable Ones”

Four kingdoms were formed out of his empire. They would be known today as Greece, Turkey, Syria, and Egypt.

The empire took 22 years to divide:

- **Cassander** (who was married to Alexander’s sister): Macedonia and Greece.
- **Lysimachus** (1 of 2 boyhood tutors): Thrace, Bithynia, most of Asia Minor.
- **Seleucus** (one of Philip’s generals): Syria, lands to the east, to India
- **Ptolemy** (Macedonian noble, boyhood friend and schoolmate): Egypt, Cyrene, Arabia Petraea, parts of Asia Minor

(A fifth contender: Antigonus, was soon defeated, 301 B.C.)

No more remarkable or accurate prediction could ever be imagined than this detailed analysis of the Grecian Empire. At the zenith of the strength of the male goat, the great horn was suddenly broken. No individual replacement grew. Instead, four notable horns sprang up pointing to all directions. The breaking of the notable horn was a reference to the untimely death of Alexander in 323 B.C., at the apex of his strength. His kingdom was divided among his four generals (called the *διαδοχη*, Gk., “successors”) Ptolemy, Cassander, Lysimachus, and Seleucus I, the four horns which arose in place of Alexander. Lysimachus received Thrace and Bithynia, Cassander took Macedonia and Greece, Seleucus I received Syria, Babylonia and the East as far as India, while Ptolemy staked out Egypt, Palestine, and Arabia.<sup>24</sup>

**McGee:** “When he was strong, the great horn was broken.” What was it that broke this horn? There was no human power that could break it. We are told that when he came to power, the whole world was under the heel of Alexander the Great. Tradition says that he sat down and wept because there were no more worlds to conquer—he had conquered the then-known world. However, in the midst of his vast projects, he was seized by a fever after a nightlong drinking bout, and he died in Babylon in the year 323 B. C. at the age of thirtytwo. “When he was strong, the great horn was broken.”

All three of these empires—the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, and the Graeco-Macedonian—went down in a drunken orgy. Let me say that I do not think our nation will be destroyed by marijuana or heroin, but alcohol will destroy it. Don’t misunderstand me—I am not for legalizing marijuana, and I believe the drug traffic is a grave danger, but we have lost sight of the fact that alcohol destroys nations.

According to the latest 1981 statistics I have seen, about 26,000 Americans are killed and another million suffer crippling and other serious injuries every year in drunk-driving incidents. We have had protest movements over the deaths caused by war, but do we see anyone carrying a whiskey bottle, saying, “This is the real danger to America today”? The drinking-driver problem creates an estimated economic cost of more than five billion dollars annually. There are no statistics on the unemployed who are alcoholics. Billions of dollars are spent each year for liquor. The facts are alarming.

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<sup>24</sup> Beiliever’s Study Bible Notes

The great empire of Alexander the Great went down because he was an alcoholic. He conquered the world, but he could not conquer Alexander the Great. There is a grave danger in Washington, D.C., today, which is that many decisions of our government are made during cocktail parties. Why do we think we are something special? Why are there people who think that the United States happens to be God's little pet nation? We think we are so superior intellectually, the ultimate product of the evolutionary process, and there is no chance that we will go down as a nation. My friend, it is time someone blew the whistle and announced that we are on the way out. If I read prophecy correctly, we *are* on the way out.

"And for it came up four notable ones." When Alexander died, his empire was divided among four men (which correspond to the four heads of the panther in ch. 7). These were the four generals who divided the empire: Cassander, who was married to Alexander's sister and took the European section (Macedonia and Greece); Lysimachus who took the great part of Asia Minor, which is modern Turkey; Seleueus who took Asia, all the eastern part of the empire, except Egypt; and Ptolemy who took Egypt and North Africa.<sup>25</sup>

**Deffinbaugh:** The ram had its day in the sun. There was a time when it could do as it wished, when no one could be rescued from his power. When the Medo-Persian kingdom had served its purpose, it was overcome by Greece, represented in Daniel's vision by the male goat (see verse 21). This goat had only one horn rather than two. It is generally agreed that this horn represented Alexander the Great. Coming from the west with a vengeance, he attacked the ram (Medo-Persia), striking a death-blow to this kingdom which had been instrumental in the return of the Jews to their land and in the rebuilding of the temple.

The goat is now the dominant world power from whose grasp none can be delivered. Like the ram before him, he magnified himself exceedingly, and with power came pride and oppression. Coming to an early demise at the pinnacle of his power, his "horn was broken" (verse 8).<sup>26</sup> Although it took a number of years, eventually four kings rose to take control of his empire.<sup>27,28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:579). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>26</sup> "All of this, of course, was fulfilled dramatically in history. The forces of Alexander first met and defeated the Persians at the Granicus River in Asia Minor in May 334 B.C., which was the beginning of the complete conquest of the entire Persian Empire. A year and a half later a battle occurred at Issus (November 333 B.C.) near the northeastern tip of the Mediterranean Sea. The power of Persia was finally broken at Gaugamela near Nineveh in October 331 B.C." Walvoord, p. 183.

"Alexander, who had conquered more of the world than any previous ruler, was not able to conquer himself. Partly due to a strenuous exertion, his dissipated life, and a raging fever, Alexander died in a drunken debauch at Babylon, not yet thirty-three years of age. His death left a great conquest without an effective single leader, and it took about twenty years for the empire to be successfully divided." Walvoord, p. 184.

<sup>27</sup> "Practically all commentators, however, recognize the four horns as symbolic of the four kingdoms of the Diadochi which emerged as follows: (1) Cassander assumed rule over Macedonia and Greece; (2) Lysimachus took control of Thrace, Bithynia, and most of Asia Minor; (3) Seleucus took Syria and the lands to the east including Babylonia; (4) Ptolemy established rule over Egypt and possibly Palestine and Arabia Petraea. A fifth contender for political power, Antigonos, was soon defeated." Walvoord, p. 184.

<sup>28</sup> Robert Deffinbaugh, [deffinbaugh@bible.org](mailto:deffinbaugh@bible.org), Biblical Studies Press, [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org), 1995

## **Daniel 8:9**

**And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land.**

**[out of one of them came forth a little horn]** Out of one of these four divisions of the old Grecian Empire will come the little horn or future Antichrist who will become great in Egypt, Iraq, Iran, and Palestine (Daniel 11:40-45). S: Egypt; E: Medo-Persia, Armenia;

**[pleasant land]** *'Erets hatstsebi* (“glorious land”) taken from the Ptolemies in a series of battles between Antiochus III, the father, and Ptolemy V in 202-198 B.C.

Pleasant Land: Dan 11:16,41,45; Jer 3:19; Ezek 20:6,15; Mal 3:12.

**[pleasant land]** Palestine (Daniel 11:16,41; Ezekiel 20:6,15; Psalm 106:24; Jeremiah 3:19; Zech. 7:14).

**Chuck Smith:** Out of one of the divisions of the Grecian empire came a little horn. This little horn was Antiochus Epiphanes from Syria. (Read about him in I and II Maccabees in the Apocrypha). He foreshadows the Antichrist of Chapter 7:8-26, the little horn who'll replace three of the ten horns. The Syrian empire spread south to Egypt, to the East, and to the "pleasant land" of Israel.<sup>29</sup>

Israel endures being a buffer zone between the struggles between the two dynasties. The “400 silent years” between the OT and NT are detailed in advance with such accuracy that skeptics have attempted to “late date” Daniel...

**Waxed—great toward the south—**The Romans made Egypt a province of their empire, and it continued such for some centuries.

**Toward the east—**They conquered Syria, and made it a province.

**Toward the pleasant land—**Judea, so called Psalm 106:24; Jeremiah 3:19; Daniel 11:16, 41. It is well known that they took Judea, and made it a province; and afterwards burnt the city and the temple, and scattered the Jews over the face of the earth.

Israel (“the Beautiful Land”) was attacked by Antiochus IV Epiphanes (the small horn) in the second century B.C. He was the eighth ruler of the Seleucid empire (Babylonia and Syria). He overthrew the high priest, looted the temple, and replaced worship of God with a Greek form of worship. A further fulfillment of this prophecy of a powerful horn will occur in the future with the coming of the antichrist (see Daniel 8:17, 19, 23; Daniel 11:36; 2 Thes. 2:4).<sup>30</sup>

**And out of one of them, came forth a little horn—**Emblematic of new power that should spring up. Compare the notes at Dan. 7:8. This little horn sprang, up out of one of the others; it did not spring up in the midst of the others as the little horn, in Dan. 7:8, did

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<sup>29</sup> Chuck Smith, Sermon notes on Daniel, Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, CA

<sup>30</sup> Life Application Notes

among the ten others. This seemed to grow out of one of the four, and the meaning cannot be misunderstood. From one of the four powers or kingdoms into which the empire of Alexander would be divided, there would spring up this ambitions and persecuting power.

**McGee:** The “little horn” of this chapter is not the same as described in the previous chapter. There the little horn arises out of the fourth kingdom; here the little horn comes out of the third kingdom. This little horn is historical, while the little horn of chapter 7 is to be revealed in the future. The little horn being presently considered came out of Syria from the Seleucid dynasty. He was Antiochus IV, or Epiphanes, the son of Antiochus the Great. He is sometimes called Epimanes, “the madman”—he was another demented ruler.

Antiochus came to the throne in 175 B.C. and he made an attack on Jerusalem. It was against him that the Maccabees were raised up in Judah. Anti-Semitic to the core, he tried to exterminate the Jews. He placed an image of Jupiter in the Holy Place in the temple in Jerusalem. This was the first “abomination of desolation.” He also poured swine broth over all the holy vessels.<sup>31</sup>

The Little Horns of Chapters 7 and 8 Compared	
It is important to note that the little horns of chapters 7 and 8 are two distinct persons. Several factors make this distinction clear:	
Little Horn of Chapter 7	Little Horn of Chapter 8
Would come from Rome (fourth kingdom) Would be an eleventh horn, rooting up three of ten horns Would persecute God's people for 42 months or 3 1/2 years	Would come from Greece (third kingdom) Would be a fifth horn, coming out of one of four horns Would persecute God's people for 2,300 days or over 6 years

### **Daniel 8:10**

**And it waxed great, *even* to the host of heaven; and it cast down *some* of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them.**

[host] people of God (Gen 15:5; 22:17; Dan 12:3; Mt 13:43). He became a great persecutor of the people of Israel (the host of the heaven; cf. “host” in v. 13) and he subjugated that nation (trampled on them). He set himself up as Israel’s king, calling himself the Prince of the host. He compelled the nation to worship him, as suggested by the fact that he prohibited Israel from following her religious practices (removing the daily sacrifice) and desecrated the Temple (brought the sanctuary low). The nation Israel (the saints; cf. comments on 7:18) acceded to this individual’s wishes because of his

<sup>31</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:579). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

rebellious attitude (cf. “rebellion” in 8:13). He prospered and so despised the truth contained in God’s Word that truth was said to be thrown to the ground.

This part of the vision anticipated the rise of a ruler in the Greek Empire who subjugated the people and land of Israel, desecrated her temple, interrupted her worship, and demanded for himself the authority and worship that belongs to God.<sup>32</sup>

**[host]** Hebrew: *tsaba’* (H-6635), a mass of persons or things, especially organized for war. The words host and hosts are used 491 times of various armies of earth and of heaven, as well as the mass of stars, etc. The term “host of heaven” is used of the sun, moon, and stars (Deut. 4:19; Deut. 17:3; 2 Kings 17:16; 2 Kings 21:3-5; 2 Kings 23:4-5; 2 Chron. 33:3-5); of the angels (1 Kings 22:19; 2 Chron. 18:18; Neh. 9:6); and here of the high priest, the priests and the Levites (Daniel 8:24-25; Daniel 12:7). It is a technical term for the ministers of the temple (Numbers 4:23-43; Numbers 8:24-25). The host may also include the worshipers (Rev. 11:1-2). They are pictured under the figure of stars of heaven (Daniel 8:10). The fact that the host will be trodden under the foot of man proves it refers to the Jewish people on earth, and not literal stars of heaven (Daniel 8:10,13).<sup>33</sup>

**The host of heaven**—The Jewish hierarchy. The stars, the priests and Levites. The powers or host of heaven are probably intended by our Lord, Matthew 24:29, to signify the whole Jewish hierarchy.<sup>34</sup>

#### **Antiochus IV**

- 8th king of the Syrian dynasty, 175-164 B.C. (1 Macc 1:10; 6:16).
- Infamous brother of Cleopatra.
- Ascended the throne following the murder of his brother, the former king, Seleucus Philopator. (He was not even the rightful heir—Demetrius, the son of Seleucus, was the rightful heir to the throne. He still lived but was held as hostage in Rome.)
- Antiochus succeeded in obtaining the throne largely through flattery and bribery (Dan 11:21).
- Came to power 175 B.C.
- Invaded Egypt, defeated Ptolemy VI v. 9
- Recalled from Egypt by Rome, he made Jerusalem a buffer state; he plundered & desecrated the Temple
- He called himself *Epiphanes*, “the Illustrious One”; the Jews called him *Epimanes*, “the Madman”

**Even to the host of heaven**—Margin, against. The Hebrew word (עַל־הַמַּלְאָכִים) means “to” or “unto,” and the natural idea would seem to be that he wished to place himself among the stars, or to exalt himself above all that was earthly. Compare the notes at Isa. 14:13: “For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.” Lengerke supposes

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<sup>32</sup> Chuck Missler, Notes on the Commentary for the Book of Daniel, khouse.org.

<sup>33</sup> Dake’s Study Notes, Dake’s Study Bible

<sup>34</sup> Adam Clarke’s Commentary

that the meaning here is, that he not only carried his conquests to Egypt and to the East, and to the holy land in general, but that he made war on the holy army of God—the priests and worshippers of Jehovah, here spoken of as the host of heaven. So Maurer understands it. In 2 Macc. 9:10, Antiochus is described in this language: “And the man that thought a little afore he could reach the stars of heaven, etc.” The connection, would seem to demand the interpretation proposed by Lengerke and Maurer, for it is immediately said that he cast down some of the host and the stars to the ground. And such an interpretation accords with the language elsewhere used, of the priests and rulers of the Hebrew people. Thus, in Isa. 24:21, they are called “the host of the high ones that are on high.” See the note at that passage. This language is by no means uncommon in the Scriptures. It is usual to compare princes and rulers, and especially ecclesiastical rulers, with the sun, moon, and stars. Undoubtedly it is the design here to describe the pride and ambition of Antiochus, and to show that he did not think anything too exalted for his aspiration. None were too high or too sacred to be secure from his attempts to overthrow them, and even those who, by their position and character, seemed to deserve to be spoken of as suns and stars, as “the host of heaven,” were not secure.<sup>35</sup>

### **Daniel 8:11**

**Yea, he magnified *himself* even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down.**

**[prince of the host]** This refers to the high priest himself.

**[by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down]** The daily sacrifice will be taken away by the little horn or Antichrist (Daniel 9:27; Daniel 12:11; Matthew 24:15; Rev. 13) and the place of his sanctuary will be cast down (2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 11:1-2). The place where the sacrifices were offered (the altar) will be destroyed and taken away, and the image of the beast will be set up to be worshiped (Rev. 13:11-18; Rev. 14:9; Rev. 15:2; Rev. 16:2; Rev. 20:4).

**Even to the prince of the host**—They seemed, in this case, to fight against God himself.

**The daily sacrifice was taken away**—By the destruction of the city and temple; and has never been restored from that day until now.

**The daily sacrifice was taken away**—The sacrifice that was offered daily in the temple, morning and evening, was suspended. A full account of this may be found in 1 Macc. 1:20-24, 29-32, 44-50. In the execution of the purposes of Antiochus, he “entered the sanctuary, and took away the golden altar, and the candlestick, and all the vessels thereof; and the table of showbread, the pouring vessels, etc., and stripped the temple of all the ornaments of gold.” After two years he again visited the city, and “smote it very

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<sup>35</sup> Barnes' Notes on the New Testament

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 walls thereof on every side.” Everything in Jerusalem was made desolate. Her sanctuary was laid waste like a wilderness, her feasts were turned into mourning, her sabbaths into reproach, her honor into contempt.”

Subsequently, by a solemn edict, and by more decisive acts, he put a period to the worship of God in the temple, and polluted and defiled every part of it. “For the king had sent letters by messengers unto Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, that they should follow the strange laws of the land, and forbid burnt-offerings, and sacrifices, and drink-offerings in the temple; and that they should profane the Sabbaths and festival days, and pollute the sanctuary and holy people; set up altars, and groves, and chapels of idols, and sacrifice swine’s flesh, and unclean beasts; that they should also leave their children uncircumcised, and make their souls abominable with all manner of uncleanness and profanation; to the end they might forget the laws, and change all the ordinances,” 1 Macc. 1:44-49.

It was undoubtedly to these acts of Antiochus that the passage before us refers, and the event accords with the words of the prediction as clearly as if what is a prediction had been written afterward, and had been designed to represent what actually occurred as a matter of historical record. The word which is rendered “daily sacrifice”—the word “sacrifice” being supplied by the translators—Ⓢ | ⊗ □ τα/μ□/ψδ—means, properly, continuance, perpetuity, and then what is continuous or constant—as a sacrifice or service daily occurring. The word sacrifice is properly inserted here.—Gesenius, Lexicon The meaning of the word rendered “was taken away”—} □™ □ ηυραμ (Hophal from { Σ } ρυ/μ—to exalt, to lift up)—here is, that it was lifted up, and then was taken away; that is, it was made to cease—as if it had been carried away.—Gesenius.<sup>36</sup>

## **Daniel 8:12**

**And an host was given *him* against the daily *sacrifice* by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practiced, and prospered.**

**Desolation of the Sanctuary:** the “Abomination of Desolation.” (Controversies begin here...11-14; 20-26.) Stopped morning and evening sacrifices. “Daily sacrifices”: *tamid*, applies to the daily offerings (Cf. Ex 29:38ff; Num 28:3ff; cf. Dan 9:27.)

“And the king sent letters by messengers to Jerusalem and the cities of Judah; he directed them:

- to follow customs strange to the land,
- to forbid burnt offerings and sacrifices and drink offerings in the sanctuary,
- to profane Sabbaths and feasts,
- to defile the sanctuary and the priests,
- to build altars in sacred precincts and shrines for idols,
- to sacrifice swine and unclean animals, and
- to leave their sons uncircumcised.

**(1 Maccabees 1:44-49)** “*They were to make themselves abominable by everything unclean and profane, so that they should forget the law and*

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<sup>36</sup> Barnes’ Notes on the New Testament

*change all the ordinances. And whoever does not obey the command of the king shall die.”*

**[And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression]** A great many people against the daily sacrifice will be given to him because of abounding sin.

**[and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered]** The little horn will cast down the truth to the ground and prosper in all his plans for a time.

**And a host was given him**—That is, power; or perhaps the host of heaven—the priesthood—the whole sacrificial system, by reason of transgression. They had filled up the measure of their iniquities, in rejecting the Lord that bought them; and the daily sacrifice, being no longer of use, was given up with the rest to destruction.

**Cast down the truth**—Probably the whole Jewish ritual and religion.

**Practiced, and prospered**—Prosperity or success followed all their acts.

**And it cast down the truth to the ground**—The true system of religion, or the true method of worshipping God—represented here as truth in the abstract. So in Isa. 59:14, it is said: “Truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.” The meaning here is, that the institutions of the true religion would be utterly prostrate. This was fully accomplished by Antiochus. See 1 Macc. 1.

### **Daniel 8:13**

**Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain *saint* which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?**

#### **Four Main Subjects of the Vision (Dake)**

1. The daily sacrifice cut off (Daniel 8:11-14)
2. The transgression of desolation (Daniel 8:13; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:45; Matthew 24:15; 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 13)
3. The sanctuary to be trodden underfoot (Daniel 8:13; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:45; 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 11:1-3)
4. The host to be trodden underfoot (Daniel 8:13; note, <sup>□</sup>Daniel 8:10)

**[daily sacrifice]** This refers to the daily offerings and animal sacrifices of the Jewish temple (Daniel 11:31; Daniel 12:11; Numbers 4:16; Numbers 28:24; Numbers 29:6; Ezra 3:4; Ezekiel 45:23). The passage cannot be fulfilled until the Jews have a temple in Jerusalem and begin to offer such sacrifices again. It could not refer to the past, for it has a latter-day fulfillment (Daniel 8:19,23-25; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:40-45; Daniel 12; Matthew 24:15-31; 2 Thes. 2:1-12; Rev. 13 and Rev. 17).

**[the transgression of desolation]** This is the same as the abomination of desolation of Daniel 9:27; Daniel 12:11; Matthew 24:15; 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 11:1-3; Rev. 13:11-18.

### **The Sanctuary (Dake)**

Hebrew: *qodesh* (HSN-6944), a sacred place or thing. Translated sanctuary 68 times and nearly every time of the earthly tabernacle and temple of worship. Not the same word as *miqdash* (HSN-4720), (Daniel 8:11), a consecrated place or thing; translated "sanctuary" 64 times.

Some teach that this sanctuary is the heavenly one and that Christ entered into it in 1844 and began examining the sins of the people to determine who shall have part in the first resurrection; that this work will end in 2,000 A.D., and then God's people will be forever free from their sins; that during this judgment both righteous and the wicked remain in the graves; and that the wicked will be judged during the Millennium.

There is no truth in these claims. God is just and will not judge any person who is not resurrected and present at the judgment to give an account of himself. Saved men are to be judged after their resurrection and they will be present when judged (Romans 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10). Sins of saints are cleansed in this life, not at some imaginative investigative judgment (Matthew 1:21; 1 John 1:7-9; 1 John 3:5-10; Rev. 1:5). No judgment of God goes on during the Millennium. The wicked will be resurrected at the end of the Millennium and will stand personally before God then (Rev. 20:4-6,11-15).

This Is Not the Heavenly Sanctuary:

1. Daniel is speaking of the Jewish temple on earth (Daniel 8:9-14; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 12:11; cp. Matthew 24:15; 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 11:1-2).
2. The whole prophecy concerns earthly events (Daniel 8:3-25).
3. The sanctuary is to be in the kingdom of the little horn (Daniel 8:9-14).
4. He is the one who desecrates it, so it has to be on earth (Daniel 8:9-14).
5. No daily sacrifice is ever mentioned as being in heaven (Daniel 8:11-14).
6. No heavenly sanctuary could be made desolate by a man (Daniel 8:13).
7. Out of 136 times the word "sanctuary" is found, it is used only twice of the heavenly one (Psalm 102:19; Hebrews 8:2).
8. Elsewhere in Daniel only the earthly one is mentioned (Daniel 9:17,26; Daniel 11:31).
9. In no prophecy is the heavenly one referred to.
10. Only the earthly one is referred to as being cast down (Daniel 8:11-14).
11. No heavenly sanctuary could be cast down and trodden underfoot (Daniel 8:11-14).
12. Only an earthly sanctuary would need cleansing from an abomination (Daniel 8:14).
13. No cutting off of a daily sacrifice in a heavenly one could be possible by any man on earth (Daniel 8:11-14).
14. No man could cast down and tread underfoot ministers of a heavenly sanctuary (Daniel 8:1-14).<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Dake's Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

## **Daniel 8:14**

**And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.**

“one saint speaking” = “awesome numberer”?

“days” = Heb. Evening and morning; “cleansed” = Heb. justified.

“2,300 days?” Year-day? Seventh Day Adventists: 1884, 2nd Coming? 24-hour days?

### **2300 Days?**

Seventh-Day Adventism grew out of the “great second advent awakening” in which this verse was given the day-year interpretation. William Miller and his followers, among whom was Ellen G. White, understood “the sanctuary” to be the earth which would be cleansed at His coming. The date for Christ’s Second Coming was set for the year 1843. Miller was a sincere but badly mistaken Baptist preacher. The day-year interpretation was a fragile and insecure foundation for any theory of prophecy, and history has demonstrated it to be false.

If the 2300 days are taken as being literal 24-hour days, the period would be between 6 and 7 years, which approximates the time of Antiochus began to perpetrate his atrocities in about 170 B.C. Six years were from Antiochus’ first incursion into Jerusalem in 170 B.C. to the restoring of the temple by Judas Maccabeus in late 164 B.C. The Jewish priest, Judas Maccabeus (“the hammer”) drove out the Syrian army, at which time the Temple was cleansed and rededicated after its pollution. This cleansing is still celebrated in the Feast of Lights, *Hannukah* (Cf. John 10:22).

“Evening-Mornings” (*erev boker*) = 1150 days. 110 days short of 3½ years...

**(Dake)** The question of Daniel 8:14 is: How long will the daily sacrifice be cut off and the transgression continue that makes the temple desolate of divine worship? The answer, Unto 2,300 days (literally, 1,150 evening and 1,150 morning sacrifices, Daniel 8:26), or 3 years, 2 months, and 10 days. Then shall the sanctuary be cleansed of the abomination of desolation (Daniel 8:14). This is 110 days short of the full 1,260 days that the 2 witnesses will be here and Jerusalem will be trodden underfoot by the Gentiles (Rev. 11:1-3); that Israel will flee into the wilderness (Rev. 12:6,14); and Antichrist will be given power over nations (Rev. 13:5; Daniel 7:25; Daniel 9:27). This explains Matthew 24:22, "but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." These 110 days could be the last 110 days of the 1,260-day period during which time the Jews somehow will get control of the temple again by the help of the two witnesses and other means. Scripture teaches that the Jews will have control of Jerusalem again at the end of this time when Antichrist comes from the northern war to fight Armageddon (Zech. 14:1-5).<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Dake’s Study Notes, Dake’s Study Bible

**Deffinbaugh:** We should begin by noting that the focus of chapter 8 is the “little horn,” just as the “little horn” is the central focus of chapter 7.<sup>39</sup> Six verses are devoted to the description of the ram and the goat. The origins of the “little horn” give little indication of the power and prominence to which this king eventually attains. After the one “large horn” of the goat is broken off (apparently the death of Alexander the Great), four lesser horns arise. The “little horn” emerges from one of these four horns. While rather small at first, it grows to be exceedingly great.

The conflict between the “little horn” and God at this point becomes almost bigger than life. At verse 10, the little horn achieves things which are more than human. He “grows up to the host of heaven,” causing “some of the host and some of the stars to fall to earth,” where “he tramples them” (verse 10). Like the ram and the goat before him, he “magnified himself” (verse 11). While the others magnified themselves above men, this horn magnifies himself “to be equal with the Commander of the host.” He “removes the regular sacrifice from Him” and throws down “the place of His sanctuary” (verse 11). This king thinks himself equal with God, going as far as directly opposing God. The “little horn” seems to change before our eyes, from a mortal man to an incarnation of Satan himself. The focus seems to shift from the Israelites, Israel, Jerusalem, and the temple, to the “host of heaven” and the “stars of heaven.” Are these angels as they seem to be (see Revelation 12:4)? This prophecy suggests that much more exists here than meets the eye. Little wonder then that Bible students differ greatly about the meaning of these verses.<sup>40</sup>

Verse 12 puts the success of the horn just described in verses 10 and 11 in perspective. One may gain the impression from verses 10 and 11 that the horn takes on God and wins. The reality, expressed in verse 12, is that the “host of heaven” is “given over to the horn,” not because of the horn’s greatness, but “on account of transgression.” Truth is cast to the ground, and everything this horn attempts seems to succeed—even his rebellion against God, His people, and His holy place.

This is almost too much to fathom, much less accept. Apparently an angel, identified as a “holy one,” speaks up, and Daniel overhears the conversation. The first angel asks how long this transgression and defilement of the holy place and the oppression of the host will go on. Verse 14 answers this question: it will last for 2,300 evenings and mornings,<sup>41</sup> and then the holy place will be restored properly.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> In chapter 7, only three verses are devoted to the first three beasts, one verse per beast. Nine verses are devoted to the fourth beast and the “little horn,” three verses to the fourth beast and six verses to the horn. In chapter 8, three verses are devoted to a description of the ram (who appears to be the second beast of chapter 7), six verses to the goat (who seems to be the third beast of chapter 7), and ten verses to the “little horn.” In both chapters, the “little horn” is the center of attention.

<sup>40</sup> “Up to Daniel 8:11, it is not difficult to find fulfillment of the vision in the history of the Medo-Persian, Alexandrian, and post-Alexandrian periods. Beginning with verse 11, however, expositors have differed widely as to whether the main import of the passage refers to Antiochus Epiphanes, with complete fulfillment in his lifetime, or whether the passage either primarily or secondarily refers also to the end of the age, that is, the period of great tribulation preceding the second coming of Jesus Christ . . . As Montgomery states, verses 11 and 12 ‘constitute . . . the most difficult short passage of the book.’” Walvoord, p. 186.

<sup>41</sup> “The Seventh Day Adventists understood that the two thousand and three hundred days referred to years which, on the basis of their interpretation, were to culminate in the year 1844 with the second coming of Christ.” Walvoord, p. 188.

<sup>42</sup> Robert Deffinbaugh, [deffinbaugh@bible.org](mailto:deffinbaugh@bible.org), Biblical Studies Press, [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org), 1995

### **Van Impe: New Symbolism-Same Message**

Daniel's been here before. The difference is that in this vision the symbols have been changed. Just as the bear appeared in chapter seven as rising higher on one side, so, in similar fashion, there is now a picture of one of the horns of the ram rising higher than the other, indicating again the dominance the Persians exercised over their partners, the Medes. So far, this is not new information, but this reiteration does not diminish the significance of the drama.

The ram with the two horns standing before the Ulai River again represents Medo-Persia and corresponds to the arms and breast of silver we saw in chapter two and to the appearance of the bear in chapter seven. Historically, this is 100 percent correct, as we would expect. It's God's Word. We know that the symbolic, protective force of the Medes and the Persians was a ram with a sharp horn. Not only that, but the Persian ruler, when engaging in foreign military expeditions, proudly wore the head of a ram on his head as a symbol of his enormous power.

Now the ram goes into action, lowering its fierce head and butting at prey to the west, north, and south. Ultimately, as our history books tell us, Medo-Persia laid waste Babylonia, Asia Minor, and Syria to the west; Armenia, and the area of the Caspian Sea to the north; and then conquered Ethiopia and Egypt to the south. Symbolized by a ram, the Medo-Persian Empire butted up against virtually every nation and principality in sight and soon became the greatest power on the face of the earth.

So far, this is more of a confirmation of Daniel's earlier dream than anything else, and such confirmation continues as we now see the nation of Greece symbolized by a goat, the equivalent of the brass stomach and thighs of Nebuchadnezzar's image in chapter two, and the leopard with wings in chapter seven. So fleet of foot is this goat that when it runs its feet do not touch the ground-an apt description of the awesome power of the swift, far-reaching campaigns of the Greco-Macedonian army.

Suddenly, however, the vision provides us with additional, detailed information, more than we saw in Daniel's earlier dream. Greece is not only the goat, but now we see a great horn appear between its eyes, a symbol of Greece's first great monarch, Alexander the Great. There had not been a military strategist the likes of Alexander in the annals of history. Son of the great militarist Philip of Macedon and student of Aristotle, Alexander, in the course of his short life, conquered one and one half million square miles. While in power, he was revered by all as a young king with singular skills and enormous intelligence, amazing the world with his military prowess.

His crowning victory came with the destruction of the once-invincible Medo-Persian empire in less than a three-year interval- 334-331 B.C. But he did not live long. He died of malaria and syphilis at age thirty-two, lamenting that there were no more worlds to conquer. During the final years of his life, Alexander spent as much time indulging his passion for sex, immoral conduct, and alcohol as he did in destroying his foes. In the end, Alexander's true enemy lay within.

### **The Alexander Complex**

Again the Bible is completely accurate as it predicts the events of Alexander's demise, describing in detail the "four horns" that replaced the single broken horn between the goat's eyes. These four horns represent the four generals who would later divide the sum of Alexander's great conquests among themselves: Ptolemy became master of Egypt, Cyrene, Cyprus, and Palestine; Seleucus grabbed Syria, Babylonia, and the southern area

of Asia Minor; Cassander took possession of Macedonia and Greece; while Lysimachus became the uncontested ruler of Thrace and western Asia Minor.

As I ponder Alexander the Great's abbreviated life, I recall the story of a newspaper reporter who went to a nursing home to interview one of the senior patients. The reporter was surprised to see that the gentleman looked so young. He asked the standard question: "To what do you attribute your long life?" The man looked the reporter in the eye and said, "Son, I drink a lot of whiskey, and I live a very promiscuous life. I smoke a box of cigars every other day, and do just about anything I want-everything the world calls wrong." The reporter, taking notes furiously, asked, "Well, sir, you've got to tell me: how old are you?" The man replied, "Thirty-two."

This man, like Alexander the Great, figured he had the world on a string, but when the string suddenly broke sin found him out, and sin won. Alexander the Great had conquered the outside world but had failed to deal with the demons within.

### **Enter the Madmen**

Now the plot thickens, providing us with a prophecy that should make anyone who doubts the veracity of the Book of Daniel a believer. As Daniel watched the vision unfold before his eyes, there came out yet another horn-a fifth horn. It started small, but quickly grew to great influence and power toward the south, the east, and the "Beautiful Land." Remember, Daniel's vision was describing events that would not take place for another two centuries, yet the prediction is accurate down to the very person described, Antiochus IV, also known as Epiphanes, the eighth ruler of the Seleucid division of the expanded Greek empire. Since he did not possess a legitimate right to the throne, Antiochus stooped to bribery and chicanery to become king, and what a cruel monarch he was. He was a madman-one of the two we'll speak of in this chapter. His anti-Semitism ran high. He hated God's chosen people as no ruler had ever hated them. Why did this tyrant take center stage in Daniel's vision? For two reasons: First, to remind us that almighty God knows-in minute detail-what will happen in history. Antiochus really did appear on the scene, he really did hate the Jews, and he really was the cruelest, most diabolical king anyone could imagine. But there is a second reason why Antiochus is mentioned here: Antiochus Epiphanes is a symbol of the Antichrist and how he will act during the time of the Tribulation.

Remember, the little horn of chapter seven is the actual Antichrist; the little horn in chapter eight is the Jew hater Antiochus Epiphanes, a photocopy of the Antichrist of the Tribulation. That's why we can use the texts in chapter eight to document the desecration the Antichrist will bring upon the house of Israel during the time of the end.

### **The Great Masquerade**

Let's look further at the arrogance of this man-symbol of the Antichrist-who magnifies himself as the prince of the host, that is, prince of the Jewish people. He would glorify himself as their prince-just as Jesus Christ will one day reign as their King-again, an end-time hint that the Antichrist will also do his best to "appear as Christ" in what will be one of the greatest masquerade attempts of all time. Second Thessalonians 2:4 says that the Antichrist "*opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.*" This comparison is an absolute match between Antiochus Epiphanes and the Antichrist.

While some Jews would go along with Antiochus' treachery-feeling they might con their way to independence by toadying up to the tyrant-they would soon discover they had backed the wrong candidate, their hypocrisy soon coming back to bite them. Even as these Jewish "turncoats" were hoping for the best deal they could strike with their foreign intruder, Antiochus began his slaughter of more than one hundred thousand Jews, demanding that the temporary survivors of his holocaust substitute heathen idols for the one, true God.

He tore up their law, defiled their women, desecrated their Sabbath, had circumcised babies hanged, and forced Jews to sacrifice a sow on the holy altar of the temple. He removed the candlestick of light, the censers of gold, the veil, and the crowns and golden ornaments that adorned the temple. He scaled off mountains of gold for his own amusement and stripped the temple of everything that held significance for the Jews. He laughed in the face of the God of the Hebrews as he commanded that coins be stamped with the inscription: *Epiphanes-God!* Such blasphemy then-or now-does not go unpunished.

### **The Signs of Things to Come**

Having accomplished his filthy deeds, Antiochus Epiphanes continued to supervise one of the greatest massacres of all time, boasting of his actions at every possible moment. If you would like to know more of this man's reign of terror, read the Book of Maccabees 1:29-64. This madman's behavior is but a mild warning of the activities of the Antichrist yet to appear-who will arrive on the world scene sooner than most imagine.

Amazingly, Antiochus Epiphanes actually enjoyed a degree of acceptance in the early days of his reign, as we've noted, by those hypocrites willing to go along with him for their own gain-even as the Antichrist will dupe millions of our world's people with his charisma and international leadership skills. In the time of the end, this "beast" will make a peace contract with Israel, but in the middle of the peace process, he will break his word and rescind the treaty. Daniel 9:27 says,

*"And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease."*

### **Antichrist-Temporarily in Control**

This breaking of the peace is a significant time in history, for now those with eyes to see will observe that the Antichrist has, in fact, become the devil incarnate. Just as Jesus was God in human form, this Antichrist, during the second three and one-half years of the Tribulation, will have Satan living in him. That's when he will say, "I am God," just as a haughty, maniacal Antiochus stamped coins with his own image in an attempt to promote his own deity. Remember, this is what Satan has always wanted to do-to be like the most high God (Isaiah 14:12-14). That's why he was ousted out of the third heaven and why Jesus said, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven" (Luke 10:18).

We must remember that the evil one has never been successful. Not that he hasn't tried. You'll recall how one day, deep in the wilderness, Satan promised Jesus the world and everything in it if He'd simply bow in allegiance to him (Matthew 4). Jesus didn't take the bait. However, when we come to the time of the end, the Antichrist-the embodiment of Satan-will finally pull off his coup and become what he's always wanted to be, magnifying himself above every god, with the assistance of an international religious public relations machine that persuades most of the world that he is the man of

the hour. In spite of the evil he will do, in all probability he will still become *Time* magazine's "Man of the Year."

This is the one who one day will sit on the throne in the temple in Jerusalem, look into his mirror, admire himself for his accomplishments, smile, and tell himself, "I am God, and there is none other like me." My friend, beware of New Agers who tell you that you can become God or like a god. To be seduced by this sweet-sounding rhetoric is the sort of banal thinking-or lack of thinking-that helps to set the stage for what will happen with the advent of the Antichrist. To be forewarned is to be forearmed. The day of the arrival of the Antichrist is rapidly approaching.

### **Daniel's Major Concern**

At this point in the vision, Daniel heard one saint (angel) ask another saint how long this little horn would be allowed to carry on its transgression of desolation-for both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot. This was the key question as far as Daniel was concerned. The history of tyrants was one thing; the real issue for Daniel was how long this angst would be inflicted on his people, the Jews. The answer was twenty-three hundred days-just under six and one-half years.

Again, the Bible predicted these events to the very day. Antiochus Epiphanes desecrated the temple, persecuted the Jews, and wreaked havoc on all who believed from September 6, 171 to December 25, 165 B.C., exactly twenty-three hundred days as the Bible says. But, as we will see, these twenty-three hundred days have an even greater significance as we continue to unseal the mysteries of the time of the end.<sup>43</sup>

### **Daniel 8:15**

**And it came to pass, when I, *even* I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man.**

**[sought for the meaning]** Daniel, as usual, sought for the true meaning of his vision so as to pass on to us a picture of world events at the end time. Gabriel was sent to give him the interpretation, and no man has a right to interpret the interpretation. He has only the right to comment upon it and relate facts to counteract the many false interpretations about it.

**[as the appearance of a man]** All angels have the appearance of a man (Appearances of Angels to Men). God also has the same kind of appearance (Ezekiel 1:26-27), for man was made physically in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26-28; Genesis 9:6; James 3:9).

### **Daniel 8:16**

**And I heard a man's voice between *the banks of* Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this *man* to understand the vision.**

**[Gabriel]** One of God's chief angelic princes (Daniel 9:21; Luke 1:19,26). First mention in the Bible of an angel by name. *Gaber*, man; *El*, God (Dan 9:21; Lk 1:19, 26).

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<sup>43</sup> Jack Van Impe, Notes on Daniel a Commentary

[“Michael,” Dan 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 9; Rev 12:7.]

**[man's voice between the banks of Ulai]** This is a peculiar place to have a voice speak. Whoever it was it sounded exactly like a man and could have been, for there were at least two men in heaven—Enoch and Elijah—whom God could have used; or it could have been God or an ordinary angel. God used redeemed men to impart the Revelation to John (Rev. 19:10; Rev. 22:8-9), and the same could have been true of part of Daniel.

**[make this man to understand the vision]** If Gabriel had the ability to make the vision clear to Daniel, who had the ability to write it clearly, then we should have the ability to understand the vision without change or interpretation of it.

### **Daniel 8:17**

**So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end *shall be* the vision.**

**[I was afraid, and fell upon my face]** Note the effects of angelic and the Divine Presence (Daniel 8:17-18; Daniel 10:5-11; Genesis 15:12; Ezekiel 1:28; Matthew 17:6; Rev. 1:17).

**[Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision]** The 13th prophecy in Daniel (Daniel 8:17, unfulfilled). Next, "Daniel 8:19. This proves that the main object of the vision is to predict events at the end of this age in which we live, or just before the second coming of Christ and His eternal reign (cp. Daniel 8:19,23-26; Daniel 2:40-45; Daniel 7:23-27; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:36-45; Daniel 12:7-13; Rev. 4:1-19:21).

**At the time of the end shall be the vision**—Or, as Houbigant, “The vision shall have an end at the proper time.”

The “time of the end,” in this case, refers to the whole period from the end of the exile until the second coming of Christ. Many of the events that would happen under Antiochus IV Epiphanes will be repeated on a broader scale just before Christ’s second coming. During these times, God deals with Israel in a radically different way, with divine discipline coming through Gentile nations. This period is sometimes referred to as the “times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24).

**Last Things, Last Days**—Prophecy often had both an immediate (near history) and a distant fulfillment, thus applying to the situation the prophet faced and also to a future time. This multiple fulfillment theory is one way of explaining how historical events can anticipate eschatological ones. See note on Joel 2:28-32. The time of “the end” will be a “time of wrath.” It was so in the immediate history of the time (vv. 20-22); it will be so in

the ultimate level of fulfillment, called in v. 26 “the distant future.” Compare Rev 15:1; 16:1-21.<sup>44</sup>

### **Daniel 8:18**

**Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: but he touched me, and set me upright.**

[set me upright] Heb. “made me stand upon my standing” Possibly comprehension, not physical.

This prophecy goes beyond the immediate future and is projected into the distant future. Antiochus is merely an adumbration of the other “little horn” who will come at the end of the “times of the Gentiles.

### **Six Examples of Deep Sleep (Dake)**

1. Adam (Genesis 2:21)
2. Abraham (Genesis 15:12)
3. Saul and his army (1 Samuel 26:12)
4. Israel (Isaiah 29:10)
5. Daniel (twice, Daniel 8:18; Daniel 10:9)
6. Eutychus (Acts 20:9)

Compare Job 4:13; Job 33:14-16; Proverbs 19:15

**Deffinbaugh:** Daniel, the man so gifted in understanding and interpreting visions and dreams, is completely baffled and seeks to understand the meaning of the vision he has seen. An angel who looked like a man was standing by Daniel in his vision. A voice from between the banks of the Ulai called out to the one standing by Daniel. He called the angel by name—Gabriel. This is the first time in the Old Testament an angel is identified by name.<sup>45</sup> The voice instructs Gabriel to explain the meaning of the vision to Daniel. As Gabriel draws near to Daniel, the prophet is overcome by fear and falls on his face. Gabriel draws near, informing him that the time-frame of the events revealed by his vision is the distant future. When Daniel begins to fall into a deep sleep, Gabriel makes him stand up. This is not the time to sleep in class. He wants Daniel’s full attention as he reveals the meaning of the vision.

Three times in this chapter it is stated that the vision pertains to the end times (verses 17, 19, 26). This raises a question, because the “little horn” in chapter 8 emerges from one of the four horns taking the place of Alexander the Great. The “end”<sup>46</sup> referred to here seems of necessity not to be the final end, still future for us, but the end times preceding the first coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Baldwin understands “the end” in our text not to be the final end:

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<sup>44</sup> Disciple’s Study Bible Notes

<sup>45</sup> The Book of Daniel is unique in that this is the only Old Testament book to name any angels. Gabriel is referred to twice by name in Daniel (8:16; 9:21) and Michael three times (10:13, 21; 12:1).

<sup>46</sup> In Daniel, “the end” is found in 9:26; 11:6, 27, 35, 40, 45; 12:4, 6, 9, 13.

“‘The vision is for the time of the end’ needs to be interpreted in connection with prophetic use of ‘the end’, for it does not necessarily mean the end of all things, but may refer to the question asked in verse 13; verse 19 supports this interpretation. Ezekiel, quoting Amos 8:1, had used the word ‘end’ in 7:2, 3. For the Northern Kingdom at the time of Amos the end was brought about by Assyrian invasion and captivity; for Judah the end was the sack of Jerusalem by the Babylonian armies (cf. Ezk. 21:25, 29; 35:5). In each case the end meant the end of rebellion against God, because He intervened in judgment. The same sense applies in Daniel 8 (cf. 9:26).”<sup>47</sup>

It seems best to understand that a king will arise at the latter part of the kingdom of Greece who will openly rebel against God, oppose and oppress the saints, and succeed for a limited period of time. This time of tribulation marks the end of an age and precedes the first coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The fulfillment of the prophecies pertaining to the “little horn” of chapter 8 seems to take place under Antiochus Epiphanes. But this end time and this king also serves as a prototype of another “horn” in the last days, who brings about tribulation such as the world has never seen and will never see again. This seems to be the way our Lord interpreted the prophecy of Daniel:

9 Then they will deliver you up to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations on account of My name. 10 And at that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. 11 And many false prophets will arise, and will mislead many. 12 And because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold. 13 But the one who endures to the end, it is he who shall be saved. 14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come. **15 Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand),** 16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; 17 let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house; 18 and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. 19 But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days! 20 But pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath; 21 for then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall (Matthew 24:9-21 - emphasis mine).<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Baldwin, p. 159.

<sup>48</sup> Robert Deffinbaugh, deffinbaugh@bible.org, Biblical Studies Press, [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org), 1995

## **Daniel 8:19**

**And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end *shall be*.**

### **The Last End of God's Wrath (Dake):**

The last end of the wrath of God upon the one (the little horn) that will cause the wrath of God to be poured out.

1. Antichrist's wars (Daniel 8:9; Daniel 7:23-24; Daniel 9:24; Daniel 11:36-45; Rev. 19)
2. His martyrdom of saints (Daniel 8:10-14,24; Daniel 7:21; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:36-45; Rev. 13:11-18)
3. His taking away the daily sacrifices in the future Jewish temple (Daniel 8:11-14; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 12:7-11; Matthew 24:15; Rev. 13)
4. His placing the abomination of desolation in the temple (Daniel 8:11-14; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:45; 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 11:1-2; Rev. 13)
5. His casting down the sanctuary or sacred place of sacrifice (Daniel 8:11-13)
6. His causing many to rebel against God (Daniel 8:12; Rev. 13:11-18; Rev. 16:2,10-11)
7. His increasing sins among men (Daniel 8:12,23; 2 Thes. 2:8-12; Rev. 13; Rev. 16:10-11)
8. His casting down the truth to the ground (Daniel 8:12; Daniel 7:25; 2 Thes. 2:4,8-12)
9. His trampling the host under his feet (Daniel 8:13,24-25; Daniel 7:21; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:40-45; Rev. 13)
10. His fierceness against God and man (Daniel 8:23; Rev. 13)
11. His yieldedness to the devil (Daniel 8:24; Daniel 11:36-39; 2 Thes. 2:8-12; Rev. 13)
12. His ruthless destruction of life and property (Daniel 8:24; Daniel 11:36-46; Rev. 13)
13. His deceptions (craftiness, Daniel 8:25; 2 Thes. 2:8-12; Rev. 13; Rev. 19:20)
14. His self-exaltation (Daniel 8:25; Daniel 7:25; Daniel 11:36-45; 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 13)
15. His stubborn stand against Christ (Daniel 8:25; 2 Thes. 2:8; Rev. 19:19-21). See other facts about him under Antichrist.<sup>49</sup>

**[for at the time appointed the end shall be]** At the end of this age and at the second coming, the time for the fulfillment of the vision is appointed (Daniel 8:19,23-25; Daniel 2:44-45; Daniel 7:23-27; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:36-45; Zech. 14; 2 Thes. 2:8-12; Rev. 19:11-21). The time of the end is stated in Daniel 8:25 as being when the little horn stands up against Christ.

**Chuck Smith:** The "last end of the indignation" is the last part of the Great Tribulation. The Old Testament refers to the Great Tribulation as the "indignation" because it'll be an outpouring of God's judgment on a wicked world. Gabriel is showing Daniel the parallels between the vision Daniel had just seen and the activities of the Antichrist.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Dake's Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

<sup>50</sup> Chuck Smith, Sermon notes on Daniel, Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa CA

## **Daniel 8:20**

**The ram which thou sawest having *two horns are the kings of Media and Persia.***

### **The Angelic Interpretation**

This vision deals with only 2 of the kingdoms represented by the metals of the image of Daniel 2, and 2 of the 4 beasts of Daniel 7—the Medo-Persian and Grecian empires. The purpose of the vision is to narrow down geographically the coming of the little horn or future Antichrist, from 10 to 4 of the 10 kingdoms, and to reveal that his kingdom will be the Revived Grecian Empire instead of the Revised Roman Empire.

Since Antichrist is seen coming out of the 4 divisions of the old Grecian Empire, we can eliminate entirely the other 6 kingdoms of the Revised Roman Empire as being the area from which he will come. In Daniel 7 he is seen coming out of 1 of the 10 kingdoms of the Revised Roman Empire. He uses the 1 kingdom he comes from to overthrow 3 others of the 10 which are the 3 other divisions of Greece. (The 4 kingdoms of the Grecian Empire of Daniel 8 make 4 of the 10 kingdoms of Revised Rome of Daniel 7.) Thus, Antichrist revives the Grecian Empire by coming out of 1 of the 4 divisions of Greece and overthrowing the others. The 6 other kingdoms of Revised Rome, which were never a part of the Grecian Empire, will submit to him without further war, and his kingdom will then become the 8th of Rev. 17:8-17, which immediately succeeds the 7th or Revised Rome.

The Antichrist arises at the beginning of the 70th week of Daniel (Daniel 9:27), and in 3 1/2 years conquers the whole 10 kingdoms which he will rule for the last 3 1/2 years of this week (Daniel 7:23-25; Daniel 11:36-46; Rev. 13:5; Rev. 17:8-17). Before he gets power over the 10 kings they reign as independent sovereigns and form the 7th, or Revised Roman Empire (Daniel 2:40-43; Daniel 7:7-8,23-24). After he gets control of them they continue as subordinate kings for the last 3 1/2 years of the week, making the 8th and last of the successive kingdoms in the times of the Gentiles (Rev. 17:8-17).  
Eighteen Parts to the Interpretation:

1. The ram represents the old Medo-Persian Empire, the same as the silver on the image of Daniel 2:32,39 and the bear of Daniel 7:5. It is the 2nd of the 4 beasts of Daniel 7, and the 4th of the 8 kingdoms of Rev. 17:8-11 that make up the whole length of the times of the Gentiles (Daniel 8:20; notes on "Daniel 8:3 and Daniel 11:1-2).
2. The two horns on the ram represent the 2 kings of Media and Persia (Daniel 8:20; notes, "Daniel 8:3), the same as the 2 arms of silver of Daniel 2:32,39 and the 2 sides of the bear of Daniel 7:5 (see The Image Interpreted). They symbolize Darius the Mede (Daniel 5:31; Daniel 6:1; Daniel 9:1; Daniel 11:1) and Cyrus the Persian (Daniel 1:21; Daniel 6:28; Daniel 11:1-2; 2 Chron. 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4).
3. The "rough he goat" is the old Grecian Empire (Daniel 8:21; notes, "Daniel 8:5; Daniel 11:3-4), the same as the belly and thighs of brass in the image of Daniel 2:32,39, and the leopard of Daniel 7:6. See The Image Interpreted.
4. The "great" and "notable" horn between the eyes of the he-goat represents the first king, Alexander the Great, who founded the old Grecian Empire in 13 years (Daniel 8:21; note, "Daniel 8:5; Daniel 11:3).
5. The great horn "being broken" represents the death of Alexander the Great (Daniel 8:22; note, "Daniel 8:8; Daniel 11:4).

6. Four horns growing out of the head of the he-goat in the place of the great horn represent 4 kingdoms being formed out of the old Grecian Empire after the death of Alexander the Great (Daniel 8:22; note, "Daniel 8:8; Daniel 11:4).
7. The four kingdoms arising not in Alexander's power represent the 4 generals of Alexander carving out 4 kingdoms of their own in their own rights (Daniel 8:22; note, "Daniel 8:8; Daniel 11:4). Daniel predicted the old Grecian Empire would be divided into 4 parts or kingdoms (Daniel 8:22), in the same sense he predicted the old Roman Empire would be divided into 10 parts or kingdoms (Daniel 2:40-43; Daniel 7:23-24). Alexander died at the height of his conquests, when about 33 years of age. His brother, Philip Aridaeus, and his 2 sons, Alexander Aegus and Hercules, kept up the show and name of the Macedonian kingdom for a time, but they were all murdered within 15 years. Thus the great horn and his regal family were all dead. The governors of provinces usurped the title of king. Antigonus, one of 5 generals, was slain in the battle of Ipsus, which reduced the number to 4 who seized upon the old Grecian Empire and divided it into 4 kingdoms.

#### Four Divisions of the Grecian Empire:

- (1) Cassander took Greece, Macedon and the western parts of the empire.
- (2) Lysimachus took Asia Minor, or present Turkey and Thrace, the northern part of the empire.
- (3) Seleucus took all the eastern parts of the empire, including Syria and Babylon, or the modern states of Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and Iran.
- (4) Ptolemy took the kingdom of Egypt, the southern part of the empire. Thus Alexander's empire was literally divided "toward the four winds of heaven" (Daniel 8:8).

All these divisions (except the extreme eastern part of the kingdom of Seleucus) were conquered by the Romans and made a part of the old Roman Empire out of which will be formed the 10 kingdoms of the last days. These 4 divisions of Greece will become 4 of the 10 kingdoms. They would be known today as Greece, Turkey, Syria, and Egypt.

8. "In the latter time of their kingdom" reveals the time of the coming of Antichrist and the complete fulfillment of the prophecy. These kingdoms will not cease to exist before the little horn or the Antichrist comes from one of them (Daniel 8:23; note, "Daniel 8:9; note, "Daniel 7:24; Daniel 9:26-27; Daniel 11:36-45). Since they are all still in existence, and since the Antichrist has not yet come, his coming from one of them must be future.
9. "When the transgressors are come to the full" is the second statement here revealing the time of the coming of the Antichrist. He will come in the last days when sin and iniquity shall abound and the time has come for transgressors on earth to be dealt with and put down (Daniel 8:23; Daniel 7:21-22; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:36-45; Matthew 24:4-26; 2 Thes. 2:3-12; 1 Tim. 4:1-8; 2 Tim. 3:1-13; 2 Tim. 4:1-4; Rev. 13:1-18; Rev. 16:1-17; Rev. 18:2-3,24). This will be after the 10 kingdoms are formed (Daniel 7:23-24), after the rapture of the church (see Rapture Before Antichrist), during the fulfillment of all the events of Rev. 4:1-19:21, and just before Christ comes to put down all sin and transgressors (1 Cor. 15:24-28; Ephes. 1:10; Rev. 19:11-21; Rev. 20:1-10).

10. "A king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up." This reveals the character of the Antichrist, showing the type of person the little horn will be when he comes out of Greece, Turkey, Syria, or Egypt in the latter time of their existence (Daniel 8:23; Daniel 7:20-25; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:36-45; 2 Thes. 2:3-12; Rev. 13:1-18; Rev. 14:9-11; Rev. 15:2-4; Rev. 16:13-16; Rev. 19:20; Rev. 20:4-6).
11. "His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power." This reveals that he will come after the working of Satan and have all the power Satan can endue a man with (Daniel 8:24; Daniel 7:25; Daniel 11:36-39; 2 Thes. 2:8-12; Rev. 13:1-5,12-18; Rev. 16:13-16; Rev. 19:20).
12. "He shall destroy wonderfully." This means he shall be distinguished as a destroyer of men (Daniel 8:24-25; Daniel 7:21,25; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:36-45; Daniel 12:7; Matthew 25:15-22; 2 Thes. 2:8-12; Rev. 13:12-18; Rev. 14:9-11; Rev. 15:2-4; Rev. 19:19-21; Rev. 20:4-6).
13. He "shall prosper, and practise." This literally means prosper and push forward or cross over. The idea is that of a blitzkrieg, extremely rapid and violent in warfare (Daniel 8:24-25; Daniel 7:21,25; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:36-45; Daniel 12:7; Rev. 6:1-2; Rev. 13:1-18; Rev. 16:13-16; Rev. 19:19-21).
14. He "shall destroy the mighty and the holy people." This refers primarily to the destruction of the new and then powerful Jewish nation in Palestine (Daniel 8:24-25; Daniel 7:21,25; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:36-45; Daniel 12:7; Matthew 24:15-22; Rev. 13:1-18). Israel will be invincible until Antichrist is given power over them by God who will allow them to be defeated and almost exterminated to bring them to complete and eternal repentance so He can fulfill the everlasting covenants made with their fathers (Psalm 60:8-12; Isaiah 16:1-5; Jeremiah 30:3-9; Ezekiel 20:33-44; Zech. 8:3-8,20-23). Fully two-thirds of Israel will be destroyed (Zech. 12:2-3,9; Zech. 13:8-9; Zech. 14:1-15), as well as multitudes of Christians (Rev. 7:9-21; Rev. 15:2-4; Rev. 20:4-6).
15. "He shall cause craft (Hebrew: *μῦθος* (HSN-4820), deceit) to prosper in his hand." This refers to his coming with all deceitfulness of unrighteousness to further his cause (Daniel 8:25; 2 Thes. 2:8-12; Rev. 13:14; Rev. 19:20).
16. "He shall magnify himself in his heart" (Daniel 8:25). This refers to exalting himself even above God (Daniel 11:36-39; 2 Thes. 2:3-4; Rev. 13).
17. He shall "destroy many" by peace (Daniel 8:25). This refers to his covenant of peace with Israel and his sudden breaking of it to destroy them (Daniel 8:25; Daniel 7:21; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:36-45; Rev. 12:13-17; Rev. 13:12-18).
18. He shall "stand up against the Prince of princes," but he shall be killed "without hand" (Daniel 8:25). This will be the battle of Armageddon (Daniel 11:45; Joel 3; Zech. 14; Rev. 16:13-16; Rev. 19:11-21).<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Dake's Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

### **Daniel 8:21**

**And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.**

Again Gabriel moves from the local fulfillment in Antiochus *to the end of the Times of the Gentiles*. We do not have to speculate. The ram definitely represents the kings of Media and Persia. So the “rough goat” is likewise labeled the king of Greece, and the “great horn” is the first king, Alexander the Great.

### **Daniel 8:22**

**Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.**

**But not in his power**—The four kingdoms which shall arise out of the Macedonian empire shall not be of Alexander’s power or family, nor have his strength and dignity.

### **Daniel 8:23**

**And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.**

This stern-faced king describes both Antiochus IV Epiphanes and the antichrist at the end of human history.

**Chuck Smith:** Now Gabriel moves ahead to the Great Tribulation and describes the Antichrist (beast). The earth is under Satan's control and dominion right now, but he'll hand over his power to the Antichrist (Matthew 4:8, Revelation 13:4).<sup>52</sup>

### **Daniel 8:24**

**And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.**

### **Daniel 8:25**

**And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify *himself* in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.**

*(Rev 13:7) And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations*

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<sup>52</sup> Chuck Smith, Sermon notes on Danile, Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa CA

## **A Type of the Antichrist**

1. “He shall cause craft to prosper in his hand.”
  - No man will be able to buy or sell except the one who has the mark of the beast (Rev 13:17)
2. “He shall magnify himself in his heart.”
  - He is given a mouth speaking blasphemies, with power to continue 42 months (Rev13:5)
3. “By peace shall destroy many.”
  - The rider on the white horse; then comes the red horse of *war*—thus, a false peace (Rev 6)
4. “He shall stand up against the Prince of princes.”
  - The 1st beast of Rev 13 is against Christ (Rev 13)

## **Summary**

- He will achieve great power by subduing others (v.24);
- He will rise to power by promising false security (v.25);
- He will be intelligent and persuasive (v.23);
- He will be controlled by another, Satan (v.24);
- He will be an adversary of Israel and subjugate Israel to his authority (vv.24-25);
- He will rise up in opposition to the Prince of princes, the Lord Jesus Christ (v.25);
- His rule will be terminated by divine judgment (v.25);

## **Allusions to the Antichrist**

### **Old Testament: (33)**

Adversary Ps 74:8-10; Isa 59:19; Lam 4:11,12; Amos 3:11  
Assyrian Isa 10:5,12  
Belial Nahum 1:15  
Bloody and Deceitful Man Ps 5:6  
Branch of the Terrible Ones Isa 25:5; (Cf. Isa 14:19)  
Chief Prince Ex 38:2  
Crooked Serpent Job 26:13; Isa 27:1  
Cruel One Jer 30:14,23  
Destroyer of the Gentiles Jer 4:7  
Enemy Ps 55:3; Jer 30:14, 23  
Evil Man Ps 140:1  
Head over many countries Ps 110:6  
Head of Northern Army Joel 2:20  
Idol Shepherd Zech 11:16, 17  
King of Princes Hos 8:10  
King of Babylon Isa 14:11-20; (Cf. 30:31-33)  
Little Horn Dan 7:8-11, 21-26; 8:9-12, 23-25  
Man of the Earth Ps 10:18  
Merchant, with balances of deceit Hos 12:7  
Mighty Man Ps 52:1  
Nail Isa 22:25  
Prince that shall come Dan 9:26  
Prince of Tyre Ezek 28:2-10

Profane Wicked Prince of Israel Ezek 21:25-27  
Proud Man Hab 2:5  
Rod of God's anger Isa 10:5  
Seed of the Serpent Gen 3:15  
Son of the Morning Isa 14:12  
Spoiler, Destroyer Isa 16:4,5  
Vile Person Dan 11:21  
Violent Man Ps 140:1, 10, 11  
Wicked, Wicked One Ps 9:17; 10:2,4; Isa 11:4; Jer 30:14, 23  
Wilful King Dan 11:36

**New Testament: (13)**

Angel of the Bottomless Pit Rev 9:11  
Antichrist, Pseudo-Christ 1 Jn 2:22  
Beast Rev 11:7; 13  
False Prophet Rev 13  
Father of the lie Jn 8:44; 2 Thess 2:11  
Lawless One 2 Thess 2:8  
Man of Sin 2 Thess 2:3  
One come in his own name Jn 5:43  
Prince of Darkness 1 Thess 5  
Son of Perdition 2 Thess 2:3  
Star Rev 8:10; 9:1  
Unclean Spirit Mt 12:43  
Vine of the earth Rev 14:18

**[Prince of princes]** Christ is this and more (Rev. 1:5).

**But he shall be broken without hand**—That is, without the hand of man, or by no visible cause. He shall be overcome by Divine, invisible power. According to the author of the first book of Maccabees (1 Macc. 6:8-16), he died of grief and remorse in Babylon. He was on an expedition to Persia, and there laid siege to Elymais, and was defeated, and fled to Babylon, when, learning that his forces in Palestine had been repulsed, penetrated with grief and remorse, he sickened and died. According to the account in the second book of Maccabees (2 Macc. 9), his death was most distressing and horrible. Compare Prideaux, iii. 272-275. All the statements given of his death, by the authors of the books of Maccabees, by Josephus, by Polybius, by Q. Curtius, and by Arrian (see the quotations in Prideaux), agree in representing it as attended with every circumstance of horror that can be well supposed to accompany a departure from this world, and as having every mark of the just judgment of God. The Divine prediction in Daniel was fully accomplished, that his death would be “without hand,” in the sense that it would not be by human instrumentality; but that it would be by a direct Divine infliction. When Antiochus died, the opposition to the Jews ceased, and their land again had peace and rest.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Barnes' Notes on the New Testament

**McGee:** Antiochus was but a faint type of this king who is coming. And he will do four things which Antiochus did in pygmy style:

1. "He shall cause craft to prosper in his hand." We are told in Revelation 13:17 that no man will be able to buy or sell save the one who has the mark of the beast. He will control the economy with a vengeance.

2. "He shall magnify himself in his heart." Revelation 13:5 says that he is given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies. He will be given power to continue forty-two months. Humility is not a characteristic of the Antichrist! He is like Satan who was filled with pride.

3. "By peace shall destroy many." He comes in as a lamb, but he goes out as a lion. In Revelation 6 he is the rider on the white horse. Notice that right after him comes the red horse of *war*—he has brought in a false peace.

4. "He shall stand up against the Prince of princes." You see, he will oppose and fight against Christ. One of the marks of Antichrist and of that first beast in Revelation 13 is that he is against Christ.<sup>54</sup>

**Chuck Smith:** The Antichrist's "peace" plan will deceive the people of the earth. When the Antichrist stands up against Jesus Christ, he'll be broken by the word Jesus speaks. The power of God is so great that no physical force will be necessary to break the Antichrist.<sup>55</sup>

## **Daniel 8:26**

**And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told *is* true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it *shall be* for many days.**

[**vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true**] This is the central truth of the vision—the cutting off of 2,300 daily evening and morning sacrifices by the future Antichrist (\*Daniel 8:9-14, notes).

[**shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days**] This is the peculiar way of saying that the prophecy will not be fulfilled for a long time. In fact, it has been over 2,600 years since the prophecy was given and yet the main part of it remains to be fulfilled in the future great tribulation (Daniel 8:9-14,20-25; Matthew 24:15-22; Rev. 13).

**History, Future**—God knows the future. At times He chooses to reveal future history to His chosen spokesperson. Such revelation seeks to encourage God's people, particularly as they face dark times. Such knowledge of the future is usually in general outlines rather than specific details. God's knowledge does not predetermine history. Humans remain free to make decisions which affect history.

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<sup>54</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:581). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>55</sup> Chuck Smith, Sermon notes on Daniel, Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa CA

**Deffinbaugh** Gabriel informs Daniel about the subject matter of the vision he has received: the events of the “final period of the indignation” (verse 19). Though not synonymous with the “appointed time of the end,” it does pertain to it. The “final period of the indignation” precedes the “appointed time of the end.” One might say the period of indignation precipitates the time of the end.

During part of his reign, this wicked “horn” appears to prevail against God; reality is otherwise. The “horn” is granted a period of time to rebel against God and to succeed, not because he is stronger than God, but because his rebellion is a part of the purpose of God. His reign is divinely purposed and permitted so that God’s indignation may be poured out on a sinful people. Because of sin, God’s indignation is poured out on mankind through this “horn:”

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 (Daniel 8:12).

The vision pertaining to the ram and the goat, recorded in verses 5-8, is interpreted in but two verses (20 and 21), one verse for each empire. The ram represented Medo-Persia; the goat, Greece. Nothing is mysterious or debatable about this part of the vision. The difficulty comes with the interpretation of the “little horn” in verses 22-26, which receive the greatest emphasis and attention in Gabriel’s interpretation of the vision.

The four horns, arising after the breaking off of the goat’s one horn, are four kings, whose resulting kingdoms never approach the power and dominion of the first. Later in the reign of these kings, the little horn does emerge from one of the four kingdoms. From a merely human perspective, he arises because of his own power and greatness. From the divine point of view, he is raised up and given power because the “transgressors have run their course” (verse 23). As the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full and the Israelites would have to wait over 400 years to possess the land of Canaan (Genesis 15:16), so the “little horn” was not allowed to rise to power until sin had run its full course, and the time for God’s indignation to be poured out through this king had come.

The sins of the Jews are in view here, for it is against the Jews and against Jerusalem that this king pours out his wrath. Through this king, God gives His people what they deserve, in full measure.

While verses 23-26 describe the actions of this king, their primary focus is his character. Arrogant, cunning, and deceptive, he is powerful, but “not by his own power.” He is so wicked and evil that it becomes apparent someone is behind him, someone greater than he, granting him power and expanding his pride. The source of this power can be no other than Satan himself. Here, as in Isaiah 14, a wicked king is described with the characteristics and attributes of Satan:

11 Again the word of the LORD came to me saying, 12 “Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “You had the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. 13 You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering; The ruby, the topaz, and the diamond; The beryl, the onyx, and the jasper; The lapis lazuli, the turquoise, and the emerald; And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, was in you. On the day that you were created That you were prepared. 14 You were the anointed cherub who covers, And I placed you there. You were on the

holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire. 15 You were blameless in your ways From the day you were created, Until unrighteousness was found in you. 16 By the abundance of your trade You were internally filled with violence, And you sinned; Therefore I have cast you as profane From the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the stones of fire. 17 Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I put you before kings, That they may see you. 18 By the multitude of your iniquities, In the unrighteousness of your trade, You profaned your sanctuaries. Therefore I have brought fire from the midst of you; It has consumed you, And I have turned you to ashes on the earth In the eyes of all who see you. 19 All who know you among the peoples Are appalled at you; You have become terrified. And you will be no more” ““ (Ezekiel 28:11-19; see also, Isaiah 14:5-6, 12-15).

This king will evidence the same pride which characterizes Satan. He will deceive and destroy “to an extraordinary degree.” He will be a master of destruction. His destruction will be all the greater because in some way he will put men at ease, bringing about their destruction when they do not expect it. His destruction will come upon him as unexpectedly as that which he brought on others, but not by any human agency. If the ram was subdued by the goat, this “horn” will be destroyed by God.

Gabriel’s final words provide instructions for Daniel concerning his vision: the vision is true and reliable and the events are certain to take place. But they are events in the distant future, long after Daniel’s death. Daniel must not make these visions known to anyone else, almost as though this vision is recorded in Daniel’s diary to be published after his death.<sup>56</sup>

### **Van Impe: Gabriel-Messenger from God**

As Gabriel attempted to explain the details of the vision, Daniel fell to the ground-with good reason. Daniel now understood the terror that would be afflicted on his people. The historical parts of the vision were clear, concise, and to the point. But Daniel could not bear to hear about the pain his people would continue to endure. This segment of the vision was also difficult for Daniel to understand because he could not fathom "end-time" thinking.

That's when Gabriel's interpretation takes a different turn. In verse 17, the angel tells Daniel that his vision refers to "the time of the end," and in verse 19 "the appointed time of the end." It doesn't get any better for the Jews, but Daniel now at least understands that there is an end-time significance to what Gabriel is telling him. This is the time when the Tribulation will be in full force-that period of history when a "time of indignation" will fall on the heads of the Jews because of their hardhearted rebellion against God.

What Gabriel is saying is this: Daniel, the indignation that began around 730 B.C. will continue through to the second coming of Jesus Christ. Gabriel is saying, "This is not for now.. it's not for your lifetime, Daniel. It's going to be at the time of the end." Verse 23 is the strongest proof that Antiochus represents the Antichrist, and that the latter portion of

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<sup>56</sup> Robert Deffinbaugh, [deffinbaugh@bible.org](mailto:deffinbaugh@bible.org), Biblical Studies Press, [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org), 1995

the vision is not for Daniel's time, because the events in this text will not occur for one hundred years after the death of Antiochus Epiphanes.

Then the Antichrist, symbolized by Antiochus's reign of terror, will be empowered by the dragon of Revelation 13:2- Satan. He will be a proud man, the great, final ruler of the revived Roman confederacy, subduing all who stand before him, making himself a master of the world. He destroys both the mighty and the holy as he employs tactics of deceit and treachery. He dupes the world with his peace proposal, and toward the close of his rule destroys millions because they discovered that he was not what he claimed to be. He will offer himself as the prince of peace (Daniel 11:21, 24). However, that designation is reserved only for our Lord Jesus Christ (Isaiah 9:6).

Still, the Antichrist does his best to pull off his charade of imitating Christ until the bitter end-even riding on a kingly white horse (Revelation 6:2) because he knows that Jesus the King will also ride on a white horse (Revelation 19:11). The one is faithless and vile; the other faithful and true. In the end, however, this terrible Antichrist shall be "broken without hand."

Again we see a prophetic parallel: Antiochus did not die at the hands of his enemies. He died of grief and remorse and went insane in Babylon, having just been defeated in the siege of Elymais and unable to bear the self-destructive impact of losing such an important battle. In like manner, the Antichrist will not die by the hand of his enemies after Satan incarnates his body. Instead, he will be destroyed by Christ at His second coming (2 Thessalonians 2:8). Finally, this personification of evil is cast into a "lake of fire burning with brimstone" (Revelation 19:20).

### **Daniel's Broken Heart**

The final words of Gabriel are an attempt to comfort God's frightened servant. He reminds Daniel that the Antichrist is not going to rule in his lifetime, but at the time of the end-when his predictions will finally be unsealed and revealed. For that reason Daniel was ordered to preserve the message of his vision in written form so that future generations would be able to make sense of the events when they transpired. This is why the Book of Daniel is so crucial to our understanding of events yet to come.

These end-time prophecies, spoken on our behalf by a holy God, would not be understood until they began to be fulfilled-a sequence of events that began with the formation of the European Union, with Israel becoming a nation, and with Jerusalem being captured by the Israeli Army, June 5-10, 1967. Daniel himself could not grasp all of these latter-day prophecies because they would remain sealed mysteries until the time of the end.<sup>57</sup>

### **Daniel 8:27**

**And I Daniel fainted, and was sick *certain* days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood *it*.**

**[fainted, and was sick certain days]** No doubt Daniel had fasted long to get this answer, like he did on some other occasions (Daniel 9:3; Daniel 10:2-3). Otherwise, seeing a vision in itself would not make one sick.

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<sup>57</sup> Jack Van Impe, Notes on Daniel, a commentary

**[the kings' business]** It would appear that Daniel was in Shushan on business for Belshazzar or Nebonidus, rulers of Babylon (Daniel 8:1; cp. Daniel 1:21; Daniel 5:29-31; Daniel 6:28).

**[but none understood it]** Naturally, none would be able to understand the vision of empires and future events, apart from the interpretation given. This does not mean that the language was difficult to understand, but that comprehension of events in such distant future was difficult. Now, in the light of the history of many of these things, we can easily understand the last end of them if we will (Daniel 8:9-14,23-25).

Continued ignorance of the plain facts comes from people changing what is written to what is not written in order to harmonize with past interpreters who understood little about these matters and who sought for a spiritual and mystical meaning instead of the literal. For example, some have claimed that the he-goat which "touched not the ground" as he went refers to the modern airplane. How ridiculous in view of Daniel 8:21 which says the he-goat is the kingdom Greece.<sup>58</sup>

**Van Impe:** When you receive the news of an impending disaster, you know how you feel: sick to your stomach, unable to eat, and perhaps not able to pray. But then, you pull yourself together, deal with the problem, and go back to work. That's what happened to Daniel. He was so emotionally drained by his vision and Gabriel's interpretation that he lay sick upon his bed for many days. Finally, after longing for greater understanding-and praying for Jews who would be born and who would suffer long after his death-he arose and returned to his duties as a minister of the king.

Even after Gabriel's interpretation of the vision, Daniel still did not understand every detail fully, even as you and I will never completely fathom the great depths of every prophecy until they are unsealed and revealed at the time of the end. The chapter concludes with a text that implies Daniel remained puzzled for many days to come, during which time he mulled over the words of Gabriel repeatedly. With all this swirling turmoil within, Daniel comes before his God with a contrite spirit and prayer of true repentance, approaching God as *Adonai-Lord* and Master-trusting the Almighty to do what's right with his unanswered questions concerning the future. Soon he'll prove his sincerity by the wearing of sackcloth and ashes, the wonderful, heart-warming message of chapter nine.<sup>59</sup>

### **Time Passages of Daniel (Dake)**

At the end of the 2,300 evenings and mornings (3 years, 2 months, and 10 days; Daniel 8:11-13,26) the sanctuary shall be cleansed of the abomination of desolation (Daniel 8:13-14; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:45; Daniel 12:11; Matthew 24:15; 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 13:11-18). No scripture says that the abomination of desolation will actually be in the temple 1,260 days. So, if Daniel 8:14 says the daily sacrifices will be taken away after 2,300 evenings and mornings this settles the question, and we have to guess about the additional 110 days making up the 1,260 days of the whole period.

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<sup>58</sup> Dake's Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

<sup>59</sup> Jack Van Impe, Commentary on Book of Daniel.

Note All the Time Passages:

1. War on the saints and having power to change the times and laws will last exactly 3 1/2 years (Daniel 7:25).
2. The daily sacrifices (evening and morning, Daniel 8:26) being cut off and the transgression of desolation will last 2,300 evenings and mornings (1,150 days) or 3 years, 2 months, and 10 days (Daniel 8:14).
3. In the midst of the week (7 years) Antichrist shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease (Daniel 9:27). It seems that the sacrifices will cease by the middle of Daniel's 70th week or at the beginning of the 1,260 days.
4. He shall make it desolate, "even until the consummation" (Daniel 9:27). This indicates until the age ends or until the full end of that which is determined to be poured out upon the one making the temple desolate; but it does not necessarily refer to the last day of the period. The end of cutting off the daily sacrifices could be 110 days before the actual judgment upon the Antichrist who is making the temple desolate.
5. All things shall be finished at the end of 3 1/2 years or the 1,260 days (Daniel 12:7), but the cleansing of the temple of the abomination could be 110 days before this (Daniel 8:14).
6. From the time the daily sacrifice shall be taken away shall be 1,290 days (Daniel 12:11) and 1,335 days (Daniel 12:12). This is an additional 30 and 75 days to the 1,260 (see notes, \*Daniel 12:7-13). It is again emphasized that the daily sacrifices will be taken away at the beginning of the 1,260 and 1,290 day periods.
7. When you shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel (Matthew 24:15; Daniel 8:14; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 12:7-11), THEN let the Jews flee into the mountains (Matthew 24:16-21). They will flee for the whole 1,260 days (Rev. 12:6,14). Again it is clear that the daily sacrifices will be taken away at the beginning of the 1,260 days, so the 110 days before the end of this period for the cleansing of the sanctuary must be at the end of the 1,150 days (Daniel 8:14).
8. The temple will be given to the Gentiles, and the holy city they shall tread underfoot 42 months (Rev. 11:1-2). It does not say here how long the temple will be desolate during these 42 months, so we have to rely again upon the 2,300 evenings and mornings of Daniel 8:13-14 for this information. The city being trodden underfoot 42 months could simply mean that the city will not be completely rid of Gentile dominion until the 42 months are up. It does not say that the Jews could not, by the help of the 2 witnesses of Rev. 11 and by other means, get control of the city the last 110 days before it is finally delivered from the Gentiles. It is clear from Zech. 14:1-5,14 that the Jews do get back into the city at the end of these 42 months. It must be remembered that Antichrist by this time will have been at war with Russia, Germany, and other northern nations for nearly 42 months (Daniel 11:44). It may be that he will need all the available manpower of his armies to conquer these countries and will take most of the army from Jerusalem and Palestine. This would so weaken him in Palestine that the Jews could gain control of the city again. It is certain that they will be in the city by the time the Antichrist conquers the enemies of the north and east, for he will then gather his vast armies against Jerusalem to battle to retake the city and exterminate the Jews. Half of Jerusalem will be taken again by him before Christ suddenly appears in the heavens with all the saints to deliver Jerusalem and the Jews

from the Gentile armies at Armageddon (Zech. 14:1-5,14; Joel 3; Rev. 19:11-21). This could explain the 110 days short of the 1,260 days of the whole period (Daniel 8:13-14).

9. The two witnesses will prophesy and do miracles to protect Israel and win her to God again for 1,260 days (Rev. 11:3-11). With their help, it can be seen how the Jews could get control of Jerusalem again for the last 110 days of this period. They will be the leaders of Israel during this time like Moses and Aaron were when Israel came out of Egypt (Ezekiel 20:33-38; Malachi 4:5-6; Rev. 11).
10. Israel will flee into the wilderness for 1,260 days (Rev. 12:6). This will exclude the remnant of the woman who remain in the land (Rev. 12:17) and many of the Jews who will return to get control of the city the last 110 days while Antichrist is in a death struggle with his enemies in the north and east (Daniel 11:44).
11. The time Israel flees from Judea into the mountains is stated as being a time (1 year), times (2 years), and half a time (1/2 year). She is helped by the Arabs during this time (Rev. 12:14). One thing is certain: Judah will have an army fighting at Jerusalem when Antichrist comes down from the north (Ezekiel 38-39) to retake Jerusalem (Zech. 14:14).
12. Antichrist will be given power over the nations for 42 months (Rev. 13:5). The 12 scriptures of this study are all that mention a definite time element in Daniel and Revelation. All refer to the 3 1/2 years, 1,260 days, or 42 months except Daniel 8:13-14, which gives 3 years, 2 months, and 10 days, or 110 days short of the 1,260-day period of the other passages. With these facts in mind we can see how the sanctuary could be cleansed 110 days earlier than the complete liberation of Jerusalem at the end of the 1,260 days. At least, nothing is said in any one of these 12 passages to indicate that the daily sacrifice will be cut off and the abomination of desolation placed in the sanctuary for the full 1,260 days.

The only other theory is that the 2,300 days mean 3 years, 2 months and 10 days that Antiochus Epiphanes made the temple desolate, 165 B.C., and that this is a type of the future Syrian king making the temple desolate. However, since there are no grounds for inserting him into this plain revelation of events in connection with the little horn or future Antichrist, we must dismiss this theory. Only one man is involved in the language of Daniel 8:9-14,23-25, so it is unscriptural to insert Antiochus Epiphanes or any second man into the picture.

Since this is true, and since it is unscriptural to make the 2,300 days mean years, we conclude that they will be literally fulfilled with the cutting off of 2,300 evening and morning sacrifices in the future Jewish temple by the coming Antichrist.

## Conclusion Deffinbaugh

Does it puzzle you that God revealed this vision to Daniel? Why reveal a vision to a prophet he cannot understand, even with the help of an angel? Why reveal a vision which caused such physical and emotional distress—and then instruct him not to tell anyone? Why indeed! If the message of chapter 8 were announced as the subject of next week’s sermon, and it was preached true to the text, most Christians would not show up to hear it. Many indeed would refuse to hear it.

While struggling in my study of this text, it occurred to me that Christians today do not want this kind of revelation. They do not want to hear a word from God if it is like Daniel chapter 8. Contemporary American Christians want the truths of God’s Word made clear and comprehensible, and most of all, relevant. We want a word from God which is affirming, that reassures that there are only good things ahead. We want clear, amusing illustrations with immediate, practical applications which make us more successful and cause us to feel more fulfilled.

Do you wonder why the prophets of old were consistently persecuted, even killed, and their message resisted and rejected? Do you wonder why the prophets did not find a willing, listening audience? Because true prophets have always told men what they *needed* to hear, while false prophets tell men what they *want* to hear.

In wrestling with the message of chapter 8, I find myself faced with some very serious problems raised by this text. In the first verse of the chapter, Daniel informs us that the second vision of Daniel, recorded in chapter 8, should be understood in relationship to the first vision in chapter 7. In both chapters, we find a “little horn,” having a number of things in common. A problem arises because they are so much alike, and yet there are some seemingly irreconcilable differences.<sup>60</sup>

One difference is that the little horn of chapter 7 emerges out of the fourth kingdom, while the horn of chapter 8 emerges out of the third kingdom. The little horn of chapter 7 is the eleventh horn, while the horn of chapter 8 grows out of one of four horns. The period of oppression by the horn of chapter 7 is 3 1/2 years; the period of oppression by the horn of chapter 8 is 2,300 days.

I frankly am unable to explain the difference between these two horns to my own satisfaction. Why should this surprise me? The Old Testament prophets—not just Daniel—did not understand their own prophecies, especially when it came to the suffering and glory of the Messiah (see 1 Peter 1:10-12).

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<sup>60</sup> Both Baldwin and Walvoord see the differences as greater than the similarities of these two horns:

“Such an understanding of the last two periods demands that the little horn of 8:9, which grew out of one of the four horns of the he-goat, be distinguished from the little horn of 7:8, which came up among the ten horns of the indescribable beast. Though they have a superficial similarity, there are many differences between them and they do not belong to the same era. This fact is an indication that we are being introduced to a recurring historical phenomenon: the clever but ruthless world dictator, who stops at nothing in order to achieve his ambitions.” Baldwin, p. 162.

“While there are obvious similarities between the two little horns of chapter 7 and chapter 8, the differences are important. If the fourth kingdom represented by Daniel 7 is Rome, then obviously the third kingdom represented by the goat in chapter 8 is not Rome. Their characteristics are much different as they arise from different beasts, their horns differ in number, and the end result is different. The Messianic kingdom according to Daniel 7 was going to be erected after the final world empire. This is not true of the period following the he-goat in chapter 8.” Walvoord, p. 194.

One could say we have a problem with prophecy because it is still future. There is much truth in this. The suffering and the glory of the Messiah now makes sense to the Christian, knowing He came first to suffer and that He will return in glory.

The apostle Paul reminds us that even when we look back on fulfilled prophecy, it is still, to one degree or another, unfathomable. In Romans 9-11, the apostle Paul explains how the salvation of both Jews and Gentiles was a part of God's eternal plan, and even a part of Old Testament prophetic revelation. God did choose to bless the Gentiles through the seed of Abraham, but this "seed" was Christ, not faithful Israel. God's blessings did come through the Jews, but in a backhanded manner. The Gentiles received the gospel because the Jews rejected it. At the end of his explanation of the outworking of the eternal plan and purpose of God, Paul looks back on the wisdom of God and finds it beyond comprehension:

30 For just as you once were disobedient to God but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience, 31 so these also now have been disobedient, in order that because of the mercy shown to you they also may now be shown mercy. 32 For God has shut up all in disobedience that He might show mercy to all. 33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God (Romans 11:30-36).

If God's wisdom is such that we cannot fully grasp His infinite wisdom in retrospect, how could we ever expect to understand God's plan and purpose in advance? Daniel did not understand the prophecy contained in his vision, even after Gabriel's explanation. Peter tells us the prophets did not understand their own writings (1 Peter 1:10-12). Why does this surprise us?

I must admit I do not understand chapter 8 either. I understand pieces of it, but not the package. I can look back and see that the ram was Medo-Persia and that the goat symbolized Greece. But I cannot understand all that is said of the "little horn," in either chapter 7 or chapter 8. Why should I? Why should I expect to understand the infinitely wise God?

God's purpose in revealing the vision to Daniel was not to enable him to understand the future before it happened nor is it His purpose for revealing this vision to us. Prophecy has never been fully understood in advance, nor will it ever be so.

God revealed this prophecy not so that we might understand completely His plan or be able to recognize every event as it is fulfilled, but to reveal to us some of what lies ahead, and to assure us that His purposes and promises will be fulfilled.

Daniel 8 tells us that before the coming of the end there will be a time when an evil king will arise who will resist God, persecute His saints, and even appear to succeed. There will be tough times ahead. This, I believe, is what caused Daniel such distress—knowing that God Himself, along with His people, would suffer at the hands of wicked men. Our text tells us clearly that the success of this evil horn is by divine permission in order to fulfill God's purposes. In the end, God will destroy this wicked one and reward the righteous.

We need know no more than this: God is in control of the future. While we may not understand exactly what is going to happen, or when, we do know that God is in control, and that He is causing all things to work together for His glory and for the good of His saints.

Many of you may be suffering this very moment, each in a different way. I ask, do you understand exactly what the future holds for you? Who among you knows precisely what God is doing, or why? Like Job, we are called to suffer without God's explanation. We

do not need to know what will happen tomorrow. We do not need to know the reasons for what God is doing in our lives at the moment. All we need to know is that He is our God, and that He is in control. This is the essence of chapter 8: we know our future is in God's hands and that suffering must precede glory. Knowing this is enough. ***If we know Him, we know all we need to know.***

I find myself reluctantly admitting, at the end of my efforts to understand what this prophecy means, that I do not really understand it at all. Why does this admission come so slowly and reluctantly? Prophecy is given to teach me and to remind me that I do not understand God's ways. Let us not reluctantly confess our ignorance and God's wisdom but gladly acknowledge it.

Prophecy is given not so we will understand all that the infinitely wise God is doing. Prophecy is given to remind us that God is in control. When His promises are fulfilled, we will look back in wonder, confessing that we would never have planned it that way, and we would not have believed God would achieve His ends that way, even if we had been told in advance. Prophecy exposes our lack of wisdom and our need for divine enablement. Prophecy assures us of God's infinite holiness, power, and goodness, and turns us to Him for the wisdom and grace we need in our weakness:

28 Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the creator of the ends of the earth Does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable. 29 He gives strength to the weary, And to him who lacks might He increases power. 30 Though youths grow weary and tired, And vigorous young men stumble badly, 31 Yet those who wait for the LORD Will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary. (Isaiah 40:28-31; 55:6-11).<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Robert Deffinbaugh, [deffinbaugh@bible.org](mailto:deffinbaugh@bible.org), Biblical Studies Press, [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org), 1995