

CHAPTER EIGHT

DANIEL

VISION OF THE RAM, THE GOAT,
AND THE LITTLE HORN



Introduction

Beginning with chapter 8, Daniel goes back to writing in the _____ language.

I believe he does this, because chapters 8-12 deal with Israel and her future. And so it makes sense that he would switch back into Hebrew.

This is the second of four visions that Daniel himself saw, recorded for us in chapters 7-12.

The vision that we read about here in chapter 8 is related to both chapter 2 and chapter 7. It covers similar material, BUT it introduces things that are new as well.

Chapter 8 revolves around three main characters:

- A two-horned ram,
- a one-horned _____,
- and an apocalyptic “*little horn*.”

Some things in the text are clearly explained for us, but others are not so clear. AND SO, as we seek to understand them, we must NOT forget what God says in Deuteronomy 29.



Deuteronomy 29:29

29 “The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever; that we may observe all the words of this law.”

As we work our way through this chapter, we will—once again—be comforted by the fact that God is absolutely sovereign over all the nations, AND over all the _____ of those nations.

Our chapter can be easily divided into 3 parts:

- the vision of the ram and the goat (vv. 1-8),
- the little horn (vv. 9-14),
- and the heavenly interpretation (vv. 15-27).

Vision of the Ram and the Goat (vv. 1-8)



Daniel 8:1-8

1 In the third year of the reign of Belshazzar the king a vision appeared to me, Daniel, subsequent to the one which appeared to me previously.

2 I looked in the vision, and while I was looking I was in the citadel of Susa, which is in the province of Elam; and I looked in the vision and I myself was beside the Ulai Canal.

3 Then I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a ram which had two horns was standing in front of the canal. Now the two horns were long, but one was longer than the other; with the longer one coming up last.



4 I saw the ram butting westward, northward, and southward, and no other beasts could stand before him nor was there anyone to rescue from his power; but he did as he pleased and magnified himself.

5 While I was observing, behold, a male goat was coming from the west over the surface of the whole earth without touching the ground; and the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes.

6 He came up to the ram that had the two horns, which I had seen standing in front of the canal, and rushed at him in his mighty wrath.

7 I saw him come beside the ram, and he was enraged at him; and he struck the ram and shattered his two horns, and the ram had no strength to withstand him. So he hurled him to the ground and trampled on him, and there was none to rescue the ram from his power.

8 Then the male goat magnified himself exceedingly. But as soon as he was mighty, the large horn was broken; and in its place there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven.

Chapter 7 and chapter 8 of Daniel are related, but different.

In chapter 7 Daniel was given a vision of four great beasts (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome).

In chapter 8 Daniel is given a second vision, but this time it focuses solely on Medo-Persia and Greece.

This vision will highlight some details related to _____ and what will transpire during its rise to power (331-146 BC). That period will be an exceptionally rough time for God's people, especially toward the end of that time. They will suffer greatly at the hands of a "little horn," a man by the name of _____.

I believe that God, in His abundant grace and mercy, was preparing His people ahead of time for the persecution and suffering that they would face.

God has done the exact same thing in the book of Revelation, for those who will be alive during the time of the Final Antichrist and the Seven-Year Tribulation.

Now, let's go back and read the first four verses, where Daniel predicted the rise of Medo-Persia (the Ram).



Daniel 8:1-4

1 In the third year of the reign of Belshazzar the king a vision appeared to me, Daniel, subsequent to the one which appeared to me previously.

*2 I looked in the vision, and while I was looking I was **in the citadel of Susa**, which is in the province of Elam; and I looked in the vision and I myself was **beside the Ulai Canal**.*

*3 Then I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a ram which had **two horns** was standing in front of the canal. Now the two horns were long, but **one was longer than the other**, with the longer one coming up last.*

*4 I saw the ram butting **westward, northward, and southward**, and no other beasts could stand before him nor was there anyone to rescue from his power; but he did as he pleased and magnified himself.*

Daniel's first vision had taken place during the first year of Belshazzar's reign (ca. 553 BC; 7:1).

This second vision took place in Belshazzar's _____ year (ca. 551-550 BC; 8:1).

You'll remember from our study of chapter 5 that the situation in Babylon was ominous at the time.

King Nabonidus had departed for Arabia, leaving the leadership of the empire in the hands of his NOT-so-capable son, Belshazzar (5:1, 22-24).



Daniel 8:2

*2 I looked **in the vision**, and while I was looking I was **in the citadel of Susa**, which is in the province of Elam; and I looked in the vision and I myself was **beside the Ulai Canal**.*

Just as the prophet Ezekiel had been transported in a vision from Babylonia to Jerusalem's _____ (Ezk. 8:1-3; 40:1-5), so now the prophet Daniel in his vision (fully awake, in contrast to his dream in 7:1), finds himself in the citadel or city of Susa, also called Shushan.

Susa was the chief city of the Medo-Persian Empire, some _____ miles east of Babylon.

The Ulai Canal was apparently a man-made canal.

Susa was an ancient city that had many ups and downs over the millennia. At the time of Daniel's vision, it was in one of its down periods. BUT that was soon to change.

After being conquered by _____, this city would grow to be the Persian capital.

You'll remember that Susa was also the city where a young Jewish girl by the name of Hadassah rose up to become Queen _____, wife of the great King Ahasuerus (483-473 BC).

This was also the home base of Nehemiah, the cupbearer to Ahasuerus' son, King Artaxerxes I (446-445 BC).

But Daniel's vision took place well before those glory days. In Daniel's vision he was transported to the city and came to rest by the Ulai Canal.

Once he got his bearings and realized where he was, he spotted a ram—a very angry ram.



Daniel 8:3-4

*3 Then I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a ram which had **two horns** was standing in front of the canal. Now the two horns were long, but **one was longer than the other**, with the longer one coming up last.*

*4 I saw the ram butting **westward, northward, and southward**, and no other beasts could stand before him nor was there anyone to rescue from his power, but he did as he pleased and magnified himself.*

There was nothing particularly remarkable about this ram; he wasn't half ram and half something else.

He had two horns, just like most rams do. But Daniel did notice that one of the horns was longer than the other, also noting that it came up after the first one.

As in previous visions in the book of Daniel, the animals in this vision represent _____ empires.

It's clear from the next section in this chapter that this ram represents the Medo-Persian Empire (v. 20).

And the two horns on the ram represent the Medes and the Persians respectively.

The longer horn represents _____, which originally was the weaker of the two nations, but which eventually became the dominant of the two.

In verse 4 we learn that this ram was more than ready to rumble with any would-be contenders.

He charged against and butted any who got in his way. No nation could stand up against it.

The Medes and Persians became a great Empire, invincible for a time and season.



It's also interesting to note that the three directions of the goat's military campaigns correspond to the details of the "three ribs" in the mouth of the lopsided bear of Daniel's first vision (7:5)—**Lydia** (an ancient nation in Asia Minor) to the north, _____ to the south, and **Babylon** to the west.

BUT just as everything was going well for Persia, a little dot to the west appeared. And as it drew closer it became larger and larger.

Two facts become clear as we read the next section.

First, whatever was coming was not _____.

And second, it wasn't _____ down either.

Look at verses 5-8 where Daniel sees the rise of Greece (the goat).

**Daniel 8:5-8**

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

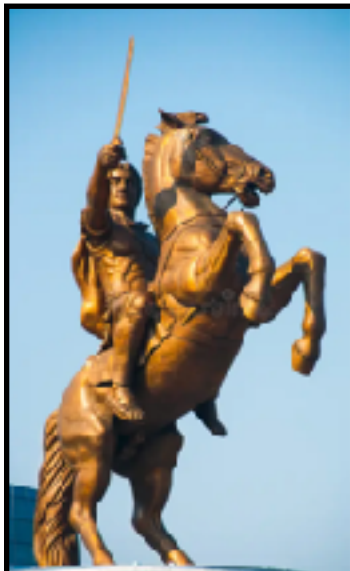
According to verse 5, the male goat that was coming from the west came so fast that his feet didn't even touch the ground.

And according to history, _____ conquered the entire Persian Empire in only three years' time.

In his vision, Daniel also noticed that this goat had a "conspicuous horn between his eyes" (v. 5).

Later in verse 21, the angel Gabriel explains that the goat represented "the kingdom of Greece."

There can be no doubt, therefore, that the "conspicuous horn between his eyes" was Alexander the Great.



The angel clarified this in verse 21 with the words, "...and the large horn that is between his eyes **is the first king**" (v. 21b).

Alexander's life was a brief one (356-323 BC), a mere thirty-three years.

BUT his influence is still felt to this day, especially in the Western world, for he spread the Greek _____ everywhere he conquered.

According to our text, Alexander and his Greek armies came against Persia in "*mighty wrath*" or "*savage fury*" as the HCSB (Holman Christian Standard Bible) says.

He quickly and decisively defeated and _____ the Persian Empire.

The verbs in verse 7 are rather striking. The "shaggy goat" was "enraged," and he "struck," "shattered," "hurled," and "trampled" the Persians. And "there was none to rescue the ram from his power" (v.7).

QUOTE:

“Alexander’s first victory against the Persians was at the Granicus River near the Hellespont (334 BC).

After taking all of Asia Minor, he crushed the army of Darius III of Medo-Persia in northern Syria (the battle of Issus, 333 BC). The island fortress of Tyre fell after a remarkable seven-month siege, and in 332 BC, he conquered Egypt without a battle. Acclaimed as a deity, he founded Alexandria and moved on to Mesopotamia where he met Darius III again and defeated him (Gaugamela, 331 BC).

Babylon, Susa, Persepolis, and Ecbatana fell before him (330 BC). By now Darius III had been murdered, and Alexander pushed his armies into Bactria and Sogdiana, down through what is modern Afghanistan to the borders of India. There in his final great victory, he overcame the war elephants of King Porus (Battle of the Jhelum, 326 BC) and led his exhausted and discontented troops back to Susa (324 BC). Truly, he was one of the greatest military leaders of all time” (Whitcomb, 122).

Now, there is also one more very interesting historical footnote that I want to include in our study of chapter 8.

QUOTE:

*“The Roman-Jewish historian Josephus tells us that as Alexander rolled through Palestine on his march toward Egypt, he came against the city of Jerusalem. Josephus records that Alexander fully intended to conquer and plunder Jerusalem, and torture the High Priest to death. But as Alexander approached the city, the priests of Jerusalem came out of the city to greet him. The priests invited Alexander into the city and led him to the Temple, **where they opened a scroll of the book of Daniel to this very prophecy in Daniel 8.** Josephus writes, ‘And when the Book of Daniel was showed him wherein Daniel declared that one of the Greeks should destroy the empire of the Persians, [Alexander] supposed that himself was the person intended. And as he was then glad, he dismissed the multitude for the present; but the next day he called them to him, and bid them ask what favors they pleased of him.’ Alexander also offered sacrifices to God in accordance with the High Priest’s directions. He treated the priests and populace of Jerusalem well, dispensing many favors, granting many requests. Alexander even enlisted many young men of Judea into his army, granting them the right to observe their own religious traditions and laws as they accompanied him in his wars of conquest. Although this incident in history is not confirmed by any other historians, we do know that Jerusalem was one of the few cities in Alexander’s path that he did not conquer but treated favorably instead. **The use of Daniel’s prophecy to win the favor of Alexander the Great is one of the most unusual uses of Bible prophecy in history” (Stedman, 116).***

Now look at verse 8 once again. Alexander and Greece do become great and powerful virtually overnight (v. 8a).

BUT at the pinnacle of his power and despite his many successes, Alexander the Great died an untimely death—*“the large horn was broken”* (v. 8b).

After having carved out an empire of _____ square miles, Alexander, worn out by hardship, battle wounds, and over-drinking, fell ill with a fever. Soon after that, he could neither move nor speak.

And within two days the mighty Alexander the Great died. He was not yet thirty-three years old.

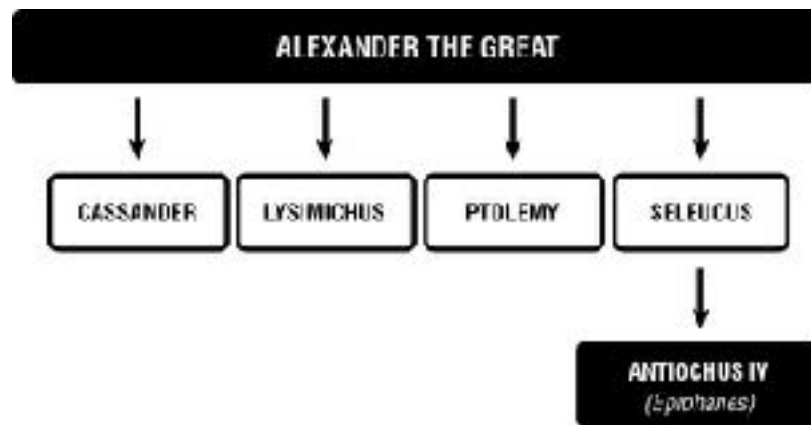
Great as his military successes may have been, Alexander failed to create a _____ kingdom.

And so, no sooner was he dead than his four generals began quarreling over the government of the empire.



The four generals were Cassander over Macedonia and Greece, Lysimachus over Thrace and Asia Minor (Dan. 11:4), Seleucus over Syria and Babylon, and Ptolemy over Egypt (vv. 8, 22).

These _____ divided up the Grecian Empire, which continued on in various forms until the mighty Roman Empire came on the scene.



Daniel wrote all of this down sometime after the third year of Belshazzar's reign (ca. 551-550 BC).

Thus the detailed accuracy of God's prophetic Word is truly stunning!

Daniel saw all of this with amazing detail two hundred years prior to any of it taking place.

And all of that points to an all-knowing, completely sovereign God Who knows the end from the beginning. Listen to what He says about Himself in the book of Isaiah:



Isaiah 46:9-10

9 "Remember the former things long past,
For **I am God**, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is no one like Me,
10 Declaring the end from the beginning,
And from ancient times things which have not been done,
Saying, 'My purpose will be established,
And I will accomplish all My good pleasure';"

This God Who knows the future also predicted the rise of Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

Vision of the Little Horn (vv. 9-14)



Daniel 8:9-14

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

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

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

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

13 *Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to that particular one who was speaking, “**How long** will the vision about the regular sacrifice apply, while the transgression causes horror; so as to allow both the holy place and the host to be trampled?”*

14 *He said to me, “**For 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the holy place will be properly restored.**”*

Following Alexander the Great’s death, his kingdom was divided into four parts among his four generals.

However, in verse 9, Daniel’s vision suddenly narrows its focus to just one of these kings from whom a “*small horn*” emerged.

Bible scholars are almost unanimous that this “*small horn*” is the evil king Antiochus IV Epiphanes who emerged from the _____ Empire many years after the death of Alexander the Great.

This “*small horn*” would reign from 175-163 BC and would severely persecute God’s people.

Antiochus was the eighth king of the Seleucid dynasty, which itself was one of the four powers that came about after the death of Alexander the Great.

Daniel describes him as being “*wicked*” and “*a master of intrigue*” (v. 23).

He began by usurping the throne from his nephew, the son of his older brother Seleucis IV, and immediately after that he launched a campaign of ruthless conquests in the Near East.

He has sometimes been called “The _____ of the Old Testament.”

Now, it is important to note that the “*small horn*” of chapter 8 is NOT the same person as the “*little horn*” of chapter 7. The context of these two prophecies is entirely different.

In Daniel 7, the “*little horn*” is the Antichrist of the Last Days, who emerges on the scene in a future revived _____ Empire.

The “*small horn*” of chapter 8 emerges out of _____ and refers to Antiochus Epiphanes.

Our text tells us that Antiochus “*grew exceedingly great toward the **south**, toward the **east**, and toward the **beautiful land***” (v. 9).

This means that he conquered Egypt to the south, Persia to the east, and also _____, “*the beautiful land*.”

As I’ve mentioned before, the accuracy of Daniel’s vision has caused no small stir among liberal theologians down through the centuries.

They deny the _____ of Daniel’s early authorial date of the 6th century BC, speculating that what we read here is “prophecy after or from the event.”

They maintain that an unknown author must have penned it, using “Daniel” as a pseudonym, sometime during the 2nd century, _____ all these events had occurred.

But for those of us who believe in an Almighty God Who knows all things—past, present, and future—such predictive prophecy presents no problem whatsoever.

We believe that God, in His grace and mercy, gave this vision to Daniel in order to prepare His people for difficult days ahead—not to recap for them what had already happened.

The latter would hardly have provided much help or comfort.

Antiochus IV gave himself the title _____, meaning “God Manifest” or “the Illustrious God.”

His enemies, however, called him Antiochus *Epimanes*, meaning “Antiochus the Madman”—a much more fitting title.

Antiochus ruled the Seleucid Empire from 175 BC until his death in 164 BC.

As he grew in power, he grew in _____.

Thus, his pride “*drew up to the host of heaven*” (v. 10).

History tells us that this antichrist-like figure opposed the worship of Yahweh, and tortured and executed anyone caught possessing the Hebrew _____ or keeping the Sabbath.

The next thing we are told in verse 10 is that he “*caused some of the host and some of the stars to fall to the earth, and it trampled them down*.”

There is no small controversy among Bible scholars as to what this means.

However, among most conservative Bible scholars, a consensus has emerged among them that the terms “*host*” and “*stars*” most likely refer to the _____ people.

Thus, this metaphorical language is describing the relentless persecution that the Jewish people faced under Antiochus' wicked reign.

Now, keep in mind that "_____ " has often referred to the Jewish people.

Recall Joseph's dream in Genesis chapter 37, where Joseph said that the eleven stars were bowing down before him.

Then in Revelation chapter 12, we encounter a metaphorical description of Israel as a woman with a "*crown of twelve stars*," clearly representing the 12 tribes of Israel.

History reveals that Antiochus brutally persecuted the Jewish people from 170-164 BC.

In verse 11, Daniel tells us that this man would even magnify himself "*to be equal with the Commander of the host*" (v. 11a).

In other words, this "*small horn*," this "_____ " would set himself up as being as great as the Most High God.

The very first time that we read about this mindset is in Genesis chapter 3, where the serpent came to Eve and deceived her with this very promise, that she would be "*like God*" (vv. 4-5).

Satan has been peddling that lie from the very beginning of creation.

AND he has had many takers along the way, including Antiochus.

Furthermore, this is not the first time that someone in the book of Daniel imagined himself to be God.

That's what happened with _____ in his early years (2:1-7).

And we saw that again with Darius (6:6-9).

Look at the second part of verse 11.

There we read that "*it*"—remember, Antiochus is still being likened to this "*small horn*"—"it removed the regular sacrifice from Him," and we read that "*the place of His sanctuary was thrown down.*"

In a blatant, defiant act toward the living God, this little antichrist entered the Temple and sacrificed a _____ in the Most Holy place.

Then he took the fluids from the pig and sprinkled them around the sanctuary, defiling the Temple.

As a final act of desecration, he erected a statue of Zeus in the Holy Place, set up a graven image of _____, and treated the Jews in the cruelest ways possible.

The book of 1 Maccabees gives us a good description of those events.

1 Maccabees is part of the Apocrypha.

In other words, it's a Jewish book that was never adopted into the Jewish Canon of Scripture nor the _____ Canon of Scripture.

But having said all of that, it *does* contain a lot of very useful historical information.

QUOTE:

“And he entered proudly into the sanctuary, and took away the golden altar, and the candlestick of light, and all the vessels thereof, and the table of the shewbread, and the pouring vessels...He took also the silver and the gold and the precious vessels... And forbid burnt offerings and sacrifice and drink offerings in the temple...and polluted the sanctuary and holy people...Now the fifteenth day of the month Casleu in the hundred forty and fifth year, they set up the abomination of desolation upon the altar and builded idol altars throughout the cities of Juda on every side...Now the five and twentieth day of the month they did sacrifice upon the idol altar which was upon the altar of God” (1 Maccabees 1:21-23, 45-46, 54, 59).

Now even though Antiochus did not totally destroy the sanctuary, he had so polluted and desecrated it that three years later, after the Syrian armies were driven out, Judas _____ and his courageous compatriots actually “**rebuilt** the sanctuary and the interior of the temple” and replaced the “altar of burnt offering” (1 Macc. 4:43-48).

Now, verse 12 is admittedly difficult to interpret.

The opening clause seems to indicate that the reason why Antiochus was able to do all this to the Jewish people and the Jewish Temple was because of “*transgression*.”

In other words, God allowed this wicked ruler to do what he did to God's people because of Israel's _____.

This man set himself up as a god, he brutally persecuted God's people, he put a stop to the daily worship and sacrifice of God's people, and he desecrated the Temple. “*He threw truth [i.e., God's Word] to the ground.*”

And for a time this antichrist was successful—but only for a time. According to verses 13 and 14, a divine timetable was given to God's people.

There we read that Daniel overheard two _____ discussing the length of time that all of this would take place.

Two years earlier an angel had told Daniel that the Great Tribulation under the final “*Little Horn*” would last for three-and-a-half years (7:27).

And here in chapter 8, these angels reveal that this “*small horn*” would carry out his horrible desecrations for “**2,300 evenings and mornings**; then the holy place will be properly restored” (v. 14b).

The 2,300 evenings and mornings may mean approximately seven years, or it may refer to approximately three and a half years (roughly 1,150 days).

Personally, I believe this is talking about an approximately seven-year period. And the reason why, is because of Genesis chapter 1.

In Genesis chapter 1, a very strong precedent is set where each of the creation days uses the same formula—“there was **evening** and there was **morning, one day**” (Gen. 1:5).

Thus, I believe it is probably best for us to understand these “2,300 evenings and mornings” as twenty-three hundred _____ days (or approx. 7 years).

→→ So to what period of history do these 2,300 days refer?

Well, according to 1 Maccabees 4:52-59, “the holy place” was “properly restored” (Dan. 8:14) on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month of the year _____, by Judas Maccabeus.

Working backwards 2,300 days from that date puts us in the Fall of _____—exactly when Antiochus’s evil rule began.

We can wholeheartedly trust God’s Word from cover to cover.

The second half of Daniel chapter 8 records the interpretation of Daniel’s vision by the angel Gabriel.

Now, before we dive into this section I want to quickly mention the different ways that Bible scholars have approached these verses in the past.

First, liberal scholars maintain that this chapter, along with many of the others, was simply written after the fact, but written in a prophetic format.

Thus, they see the book of Daniel as a second-century work.

A **second** way that scholars have viewed this chapter is to see it as _____ fulfilled by Antiochus IV, with nothing more in view.

This is similar to modern-day Preterism which sees the book of Revelation as having already been fulfilled with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish Temple in AD70.

This perspective is rejected by most Pre-millennialists.

The **third** view is that chapter 8 was fulfilled _____ in the person and activities of Antiochus IV, but that this “*small horn*” also prefigures the future “*Little Horn*” or Antichrist of the Tribulation.

Thus, they believe that Antiochus was a “_____” of the coming Antichrist.

QUOTE:

“A type is an Old Testament institution, event, person, object or ceremony that has reality and purpose in Biblical history but also by divine design foreshadows something yet to be revealed” (Rhodes, 211).

In other words, there is important information that can be gleaned from these verses regarding not just Antiochus, but also the future Antichrist.

The Heavenly Interpretation (vv. 15-27)

The Heavenly Interpreter (vv. 15-19)



Daniel 8:15-19

15 When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it; and behold, standing before me was one who looked like a man.

*16 And I heard the voice of a man between the banks of Ulai, and he called out and said, “**Gabriel**, give this man an **understanding of the vision**.”*

*17 So he came near to where I was standing, and when he came I was frightened and fell on my face; but he said to me, “Son of man, understand that the vision pertains to **the time of the end**.”*

18 Now while he was talking with me, I sank into a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me and made me stand upright.

*19 He said, “Behold, I am going to let you know what will occur **at the final period of the indignation**, for it pertains to the appointed time of the end.”*

God’s revelation of Himself in the Bible is an enormous gift. And His interpretation of His revelation is an even bigger gift!

Think about it.

IF God had never revealed Himself in Scripture, then all we would have would be General Revelation—
_____ (Rom. 1) and **conscience** (Rom. 2).

From those two things, we would know that a Supreme Being does exist, that He is powerful, and that He has made us moral creatures (Psa. 19; Rom. 1 and 2).

Beyond that, we would be left in the dark. But our God has NOT left us in the dark.

On the contrary, He _____ in revealing Himself to His people.

And in verses 15-27, God sends an angel by the name of Gabriel to help His prophet Daniel understand the vision he just saw in verses 1-14.

Now, go back up and look at verse 15 again with me.

Daniel said that he “*sought to understand it*”—that is, the vision that he just saw.

In earlier years, Daniel had been the one to _____ the dreams and mysteries of others.

He interpreted two dreams for Nebuchadnezzar (ch. 2, 4).

And he interpreted the handwriting on the wall for Belshazzar (ch. 5).

But now, Daniel needs help interpreting his own dreams and visions. And so, God sent His angel Gabriel for the task. Daniel says that Gabriel appeared to him in the form of a man.

Now, this is not uncommon in the Scriptures. As a matter of fact, listen to what the book of Hebrews says.



Hebrews 13:2

2 Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.

In other words, angels can appear so much like human beings, that sometimes they won't even be _____ as angels.

Now look at verse 16.

Daniel tells us that from between the banks of the Ulai Canal he heard a supernatural voice, possibly from the pre-incarnate _____ Himself, for it's described as “*the voice of a man*,” and that phraseology is never used for God the Father.

The voice commanded Gabriel to give Daniel “*an understanding of the vision*” (v. 16b).

This is the first time in Scripture that a holy angel is _____.

And his name literally means “Man of God” or “Hero of God.”

(The only other holy angel named in Scripture is _____, whose name means “Who is like God?”).

Gabriel is specifically portrayed in Scripture as one who brings revelation to the people of God (Dan. 8:15-27; 9:21; Luke 1:11-19; 26-38).

Now, according to verse 17, Daniel is terrified when the angel Gabriel approaches him, so much so that he “*fell on [his] face*” before the heavenly messenger.

Gabriel addressed Daniel as “*son of man*” (literally “*son of* _____”).

Gabriel then tells Daniel that he has come to help him “*understand that the vision pertains to the time of the end*” (v. 17b).

Now, when we hear that phrase “*time of the end*,” we automatically think of the end of the age, that is, the Second Coming of Christ.

But, in this context, it primarily has to do with the particular persons and events prophesied in this chapter—Antiochus Epiphanes and his persecution of the Jewish people.

Thus, this has led many Bible expositors to conclude that “*the time of the end*” has both a _____ and _____ fulfillment.

In other words, YES, this pertains to Antiochus IV, but it ALSO pertains to the Antichrist of the Final Tribulation.

Now, look at Daniel’s response as he found himself in the presence of this mighty heavenly angel.

In verse 17, we already read that he “*was frightened and fell on [his] face.*”

But now in verse 18, as Gabriel was talking with Daniel, he said that he “*sank into a deep sleep with his face to the ground.*”

In other words, Daniel simply became overwhelmed in the presence of this glorious and powerful angelic being.

But Gabriel _____ him and made him stand back up (v. 18).

Then in verse 19, Gabriel says, “*Behold, I am going to let you know what will occur at **the final period of the indignation***” (v. 19a).

And then in what appears to be a parallel phrase, he doubles down and says that this vision “*pertains to **the appointed time of the end***” (v. 19b).

Gabriel understands that Daniel is not merely interested in the rise and fall of Gentile Kingdoms, but rather in their rise and fall as it pertains to the establishment of the future _____ Kingdom, *i.e.* the “*stone cut out without hands*” of chapter 2, and the “*Son of Man*” seen in chapter 7.

As mentioned already, most Pre-millennial scholars see both a near and a far application in Daniel chapter 8. Listen to what three different scholars had to say:

QUOTE:

“But what did Gabriel mean when he said that ‘the vision pertains to the time of the end’? This expression cannot properly be applied to the career of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Not only did he die a hundred years before his kingdom came to an end, but also his kingdom was followed by another world empire, namely, Rome. ‘The time of the end’ is actually a technical expression that refers to the events

that will accompany the Second Coming of Christ to destroy the kingdoms of this world and to establish His own everlasting kingdom (see the contextual use of this expression in Dan. 11:35 and 11:40)” (Whitcomb, 115).

QUOTE:

“This chapter constantly points to the time of the end (see vv. 19, 23, 26). ‘The time of the end’ is a standing expression in Daniel for the time of the Antichrist (see Dan. 9:26; 11:35, 40, 45; 12:4, 6, 9). It is the time of the last year-week of Daniel and particularly the second half of it ” (Bultema, 246).

QUOTE:

“It may be concluded that many Pre-millennial expositors find a dual fulfillment in Daniel 8...most of them find the futuristic elements emphasized, especially in the interpretation of the vision” (Walvoord, 196).

So while the days of Antiochus Epiphanes are most certainly in view here, and as terrible as they were for the Jews who lived during that time, Gabriel lets Daniel know that all of that will be far surpassed by the final Antichrist, who, in the final 3-and-a-half years of his rule over this earth, will _____ the Jews unlike they have ever experienced.

The following three verses (vv. 20-22) are absolutely critical in the interpretation of the main characters in the vision of verses 1-15.

The Heavenly Interpretation (vv. 20-22)



Daniel 8:20-22

20 The ram which you saw with the two horns represents the kings of Media and Persia.

21 The shaggy goat represents the kingdom of Greece, and the large horn that is between his eyes is the first king.

22 The broken horn and the four horns that arose in its place represent four kingdoms which will arise from his nation, although not with his power.

There was nothing cryptic in these words. Gabriel made the interpretation as clear as possible.

The two-horned ram represents the kingdom of the Medes and Persians (v. 20).

“*The shaggy goat*” refers to Greece (v. 21).

The large horn that was between the goat’s eyes was Alexander the Great, “*the first king*” (v. 21).

Then Gabriel explains the four horns that replaced the broken horn as four kingdoms that will arise out of Greece after the death of Alexander the Great (v. 22).

Those four generals (Cassander, Lysimachus, Seleucus, and Ptolemy) will be mini-empires.

Now, of the four new empires that came about after the death of Alexander the Great, there is only one that the vision now follows and that is the territory given to Seleucus, which included _____—
a.k.a., *“the beautiful land.”*

And now the focus of the vision narrows to one of the evil rulers of the Seleucid kingdom, who foreshadows the ultimate Antichrist yet to come.

An Antichrist and THE Antichrist (vv. 23-26)



Daniel 8:23-26

*23 “In the latter period of their rule,
When the transgressors have run their course,
A king will arise,
Insolent and skilled in intrigue.
24 “His power will be mighty, but not by his own power;
And he will destroy to an extraordinary degree
And prosper and perform his will;
He will destroy mighty men and the holy people.
25 “And through his shrewdness
He will cause deceit to succeed by his influence;
And he will magnify himself in his heart,
And he will destroy many while they are at ease.
**He will even oppose the Prince of princes,
But he will be broken without human agency.**
26 “The vision of the evenings and mornings
Which has been told is true;
But keep the vision secret,
For it pertains to many days in the future.”*

It’s no wonder this vision left Daniel *“exhausted and sick for days,”* according to verse 27.

Now, as mentioned already, A LOT of Bible prophecies have both a near and a far fulfillment.

The first part of Daniel’s vision had a near fulfillment, about which Gabriel was precise and succinct in his interpretation.

The ram was Medo-Persia, and the goat was Greece (vv. 20-22).

BUT beginning in verse 23 the whole _____ of the narrative changes.

Instead of giving us a date, Daniel says, *“in the latter period”* (v. 23a).

And rather than giving us a name, Gabriel speaks of “*a king*” (v. 23b).

In these verses Gabriel becomes very general in his interpretation to Daniel.

This change of style opens the door for us to begin looking at a _____ fulfillment. But we must ALWAYS be cautious when doing so.

In other words, we must always be careful to only ascribe to predictive prophecy a near and far fulfillment IF the wider context of Scripture allows for such an interpretation. And in this case, it most definitely does.

I believe that these three verses (vv. 23-25) refer to both the historical ruler Antiochus Epiphanes AND to the future Antichrist.

Hence, some of these descriptive statements will seem more appropriate for Antiochus IV, while others will not seem to apply directly to him.

For example, in verse 25, it says that “*He will oppose the Prince of princes.*”

The Prince of princes is undoubtedly Jesus Christ, Who won’t come on the scene for another _____ years or so after Antiochus IV.

And so, this prophecy seems far more appropriate for the _____ Antichrist and his blatant and blasphemous opposition to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Also, the statement in verse 25 that says that “*he will be broken **without human agency***” also seems to describe a _____ judgment rather than a normal, earthly one.

That would seem to apply to the final Antichrist, who will be destroyed supernaturally at the Second Coming of Christ (Rev. 19:19-20).

Antiochus Epiphanes was pure evil, to be sure. BUT as terrible as this “*small horn*” was, there is coming yet a ruler who will far surpass even Antiochus’ wicked and evil behavior.

Paul wrote of this coming world ruler in his second letter to the Thessalonians.



2 Thessalonians 2:3-4

3 Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,

4 who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.

That passage could easily have been written about Antiochus IV, but he had been dead for more than 200 years at the time Paul wrote those words.

Thus, this passage is undoubtedly speaking of the _____ world leader, a future “*Little Horn*,” a future “*beast*” who will come on the scene.

All of this was a lot for Daniel to take in, and Gabriel now wraps up the interpretation for him.

The End of Daniel’s Second Vision (vv. 26-27)



Daniel 8:26-27

26 “The vision of the evenings and mornings

Which has been told is true;

But keep the vision secret,

For it pertains to many days in the future.”

27 Then I, Daniel, was exhausted and sick for days. Then I got up again and carried on the king’s business; but I was astounded at the vision, and there was none to explain it.

The angel Gabriel commands Daniel to “*keep the vision secret.*”

→→ WHY?

There are several views out there.

Some believe that Gabriel was telling Daniel NOT to share the vision during _____ reign, lest someone interpret it as treason or insurrection.

Others think that Gabriel intended Daniel to put the vision away for “safekeeping” for future generations.

Still others believe that it means, “Keep the vision confidential for now because it pertains to the distant future, and has little relevance for the present generation.”

And still others believe that Gabriel’s command simply means, “Conclude the vision.”

Now look at verse 27 once again with me. Nothing that Daniel has seen in his previous visions could compare with the horrific atrocities that he now knew would come upon his beloved fellow Jews.

This vision of 2,300 days of persecution and _____ through one wicked king, only to be followed later by an even greater instrument of Satan, was simply too much for the old prophet to bear.

He admitted that he was literally “*exhausted and sick for days.*”

Adding to his overall condition, Daniel ends the chapter with the words, “*and there was none to explain it.*” Yes, he understood about the ram and the goat. That was easy. BUT beyond that, the vision was still a very, very troubling mystery.

Daniel must often have thought, “If only Gabriel would come back and fill in the missing pieces!”

Well, it took eleven years of waiting, but that’s exactly what happened!

Life Lessons

Life Lesson #1—God’s People Endure Troubles

Sometimes God’s people will have to endure lengthy trials. Think of the Jews who read the phrase “*For 2,300 evenings and mornings*” (v. 14). That’s almost seven years!

So, yes! Sometimes, God’s people will have to endure lengthy trials.

This reality is especially reflected in the Psalms.



Psalm 13:1-2

1 How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever?

How long will You hide Your face from me?

2 How long shall I take counsel in my soul,

Having sorrow in my heart all the day?

How long will my enemy be exalted over me?



Psalm 35:17

17 Lord, how long will You look on?

Rescue my soul from their ravages,

My only life from the lions.

(See also Psa. 74:10; 79:5; 80:4; 89:46; 90:13; 94:3; 119:84.)

→→ So what’s the solution?

First, the solution is to continually look _____.! We must keep our eyes firmly fixed on the Author and Perfector of our faith (Heb. 12:2).

Second, we must rest in the comfort of God’s _____. Beloved, DO NOT allow the truth of God’s sovereignty to become so familiar that you are no longer absolutely awed by it!



Romans 8:28

28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

Life Lesson #2—God’s Word Endures Forever

In Daniel 8:12 we read that one of Antiochus’s sins was that he flung “*truth to the ground.*”

That wicked man not only destroyed copies of God’s Word, specifically scrolls of the Torah (see 1 Maccabees 1:56-57), but he put to death anyone who was found in possession of them.

But regardless of such acts of satanic hatred and aggression, God’s Word can _____ be destroyed.

→→ How do I know that? Because God told us so.



Isaiah 40:8

*8 The grass withers, the flower fades,
But the Word of our God stands forever.*

And Jesus said,



Matthew 24:35

35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

Life Lesson #3—Evil People Do NOT Endure

Scripture reveals that the evil of Antiochus seemed to flourish for a time and a season.

BUT Antiochus still had an _____ date.

The psalmist struggled with the same thought recorded for us in Psalm 73.



Psalm 73:1-3

*1 Surely God is good to Israel,
To those who are pure in heart!
2 But as for me, my feet came close to stumbling,
My steps had almost slipped.
3 For I was envious of the arrogant
As I saw the prosperity of the wicked.*

If that were the end of the psalm, then truly all would be vanity. But in wisdom, the psalmist realized that this was NOT the end of the story.

**Psalm 73:16-19**

*16 When I pondered to understand this,
It was troublesome in my sight
17 Until I came into the sanctuary of God;
Then I perceived their end.
18 Surely You set them in slippery places;
You cast them down to destruction.
19 How they are destroyed in a moment!
They are utterly swept away by sudden terrors!*

Those who fight against God and His people will NOT endure, but will face swift judgment and eternal punishment.

Life Lesson #4—God’s People DO Endure

After Daniel’s sickness passed, he got back up and went back to work.

Listen to the end of verse 27 once again: *“Then I **got up** again and **carried on** the king’s business.”*

When I read this, I am also reminded of our Lord’s own words to His disciples when He told them a parable about the Second Coming and then said, *“Occupy till I come”* (Luke 19:13 KJV).

God’s servants should go about the _____ business until the King returns.

QUOTE:

“He returned to the duties to which God had called him. He did not retire from the world in view of the evil days that were coming. Nor did he go to the opposite extreme and live on a ‘high’ visionary excitement. Instead he did his duty.”

“Daniel’s attitude illustrates an important Biblical principle: In view of what the future holds, we must live holy lives now. He caught a glimpse of realities that would take place centuries later. Those events were shadows of the last conflict between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdoms of the world. One day Christ will return and the Antichrist ‘shall be broken without human hands’ just as Antiochus was. We know this from the New Testament. How then should we live? Passage after passage gives the same answer: Do the King’s business; walk in obedience; live in holiness; purify yourself as He is pure.”

“While riding to a preaching engagement one day, John Wesley was stopped by a stranger who asked him what he would do if he knew that Christ was going to return at noon the next day. Wesley reached into his saddlebag, retrieved his diary, read out his engagements for the rest of the day and for the morning of the next day, and said, ‘That, dear sir, is what I would do.’ His knowledge of the Lord’s future kingdom allowed him to live already for that kingdom. That was the spirit of Daniel. Is it so surprising that his life made such a lasting impression?” (Ferguson, Daniel, 165).

Beloved, we should ALL live every day as if God Himself told us that we are living in the very last of the Last Days.

In other words, we should all be _____ and faithful doing the King's work every day!

Life Lesson #5—God's Purpose for Prophecy Endures

Out of the 23,210 verses in the Old Testament, 6,641 (28.5%) are prophetic. The New Testament contains 7,914 verses, and 1,711 (21.5%) are prophetic. Merging the two Testaments together, 8,352 of the Bible's 31,124 verses are prophetic. That comes to _____% of the Bible—more than one-fourth—being prophetic. God did not give us all this prophecy so that we would merely have heads full of knowledge about what the future holds. Rather, He gave us all of this prophecy SO THAT we would _____ rightly.

Predictive prophecy teaches us that the God of the Bible is the One True God, and that the Bible is the trustworthy revelation of that One True God. Predictive prophecy demonstrates that God is _____ over ALL human events (past, present, and future). Prophecy gives us an exalted view of Jesus as the King of kings and Lord of lords, and it causes us to yearn for His soon return. And finally, it assures our heads and our hearts that God will ultimately triumph over all evil.

In other words, as I've heard said many times in the past, "I've read the end of the Book, and WE WIN!"

Come quickly, Lord Jesus!!!