

Session 6 The Personality & Power of the Antichrist (Dan. 8:15-27)

review: outline of Daniel 8

- A. Daniel's vision (Dan. 8:1-14)
- B. Gabriel appeared to Daniel to explain and expand the vision (8:15-25)
 1. The vision pertains to the end times (8:15-19)
 2. Gabriel's explanation of the symbols (8:20-22)
 3. The Antichrist's personality and power (8:23-25)
- C. The importance of the vision (8:26-27)
- the importance of understanding God's view of the Antichrist

Jesus called His people "to see" the abomination of desolation and then pointed us to the book of Daniel to grasp it (Mt. 24:15). This is the central event that helps us to understand the pressures of the end and God's view of the Antichrist and his horrific ways.

¹⁵“When you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place...” ¹⁶then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains... ²¹For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been...” (Mt. 24:15-21)

The most emphasized theme in the book of Daniel, surprisingly, is not Jesus, but the Antichrist. Why? Because the Lord knows that many will be *deceived* by the Antichrist or *offended* at Christ because of the persecution related to the Antichrist. Both will lead to the end-time falling away (Mt. 24:9-13; 2 Thes. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:1-2; 2 Tim. 3:1-7; 4:3-5; 2 Pet. 2:1-3). The negative issue that Jesus most emphasized in Matthew 24 was the need to avoid deception (Mt. 24:4-5, 11, 24).

⁴“Take heed that no one deceives you... ⁹They will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. ¹⁰Then many will be offended... ¹¹Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many... ²⁴For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. (Mt. 24:4, 9-10, 24)

One of the main points in the book of Daniel, and the subject of the abomination of desolation, is how *uniquely horrific the Antichrist is*. He is incarnate evil, even incarnate cruelty. His most prominent name in Scripture is the Beast. He is called the Beast 36 times in Revelation so that all will know that it will be impossible to negotiate with him for mercy. Too many have not grasped that the most horrific man in history is coming. Many Bible teachers believe that references to him are symbolic; thus, they do not believe that he will even exist. Many believers know little about the abomination of desolation, and many Bible teachers have never taught on it. God raised up Daniel as a forerunner prophet 2,500 years ago as a premier gift to the generation in which the Lord returns, so that God's people will be not seduced by the Antichrist's grandeur or passive about the certainty of his coming.

The two most detailed prophecies about the Antichrist in the OT are found in Daniel 8:9-26 and 11:21-36. They parallel Revelation 13 (the most detailed NT prophecy about the Antichrist).

Gabriel appeared to Daniel (Dan. 8:15-19)

The Lord sent Gabriel to give Daniel understanding of the vision (8:15-16).

¹⁵...when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and was seeking the meaning...suddenly there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. ¹⁶And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, who called, and said, “Gabriel, make this man understand the vision.” (Dan. 8:15-16)

Seeking the meaning: Daniel had seen the vision and was seeking the meaning; suddenly Gabriel stood before

him in the appearance of a man.

Gabriel: Gabriel’s appearance indicates the importance of this vision. Gabriel is mentioned four times in the Scripture—twice in Daniel (8:16; 9:21) and twice in the gospel of Luke (Lk. 1:11-20, 26-38). Each time he delivered significant messages directly related to the coming of the Messiah. He is known as a “messenger angel.”

Daniel’s response to seeing Gabriel (8:17-18)

¹⁷...he said to me, “Understand, son of man, that the vision refers to the time of the end”... ¹⁹And he said, “Look, I am making known to you what shall happen in the latter time of the indignation; for at the appointed time the end shall be.” (Dan. 8:17-19)

Son of man: Gabriel called Daniel “son of man,” and then 13 years later Gabriel called him “greatly beloved” (9:23). The title “son of man” indicates human weakness.

The indignation: The term *indignation* in Scripture points to the times in which God was indignant with Israel because of their sin.

It is a time when God disciplined Israel, usually through Gentile armies.

The oppression of Israel by Assyria (Isa. 10:5, 25) and Babylon (Lam. 2:6) are referred to as indignation.

The “indignation” refers to God’s discipline of Israel in the days of Antiochus and during the Great Tribulation.

Time of the end: Gabriel’s first message was that Daniel should understand that the vision refers to the “time of the end” or the end times (8:17). He repeated three more times that the message pertained to the end times—the “latter time of the indignation” (8:19), the “appointed time of the end” (8:19), and in the “latter time” (8:23). The vision pertains to “the latter time of the indignation,” i.e., the end of the indignation period. The “latter portion of the indignation” and the “time of the end” are synonyms.

Gabriel’s explanation of the symbols (Dan. 8:20-22)

Gabriel interpreted the ram with two horns and the male goat with the large horn (8:20-22).

Most agree that this was completely fulfilled in history by the Medo-Persian and Greek empires.

²⁰The ram which you saw, having the two horn—they are the kings of Media and Persia.

²¹And the male goat is the kingdom of Greece. The large horn that is between its eyes is the first king

[**Alexander the Great**]. ²²As for the broken horn and the four that stood up in its place, four kingdoms shall arise out of that nation, but not with its power. (Dan. 8:20-22)

The ram: The two horns are the kings of Media and Persia.

The male goat: This speaks of the kingdom of Greece.

The large horn: The horn between its eyes is the first king, Alexander the Great.

The broken horn: Alexander died in Babylon at the age of 32 in 323 BC.

The four horns: They are referred to as the four notable horns that came up (8:8) in place of Alexander. Four kingdoms arose following his death. In place of Alexander the Great, four of his notable generals divided up his kingdom into four separate kingdoms. This parallels the four heads of Daniel 7:6. the Antichrist’s Personality and power (Dan. 8:23-25)

Daniel 8 emphasizes the Antichrist’s activities related to the Jewish people and the temple in Jerusalem (8:9-14), and his greatly cruelty in his reign of terror over the nations (8:23-25).

²³“In the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors have reached their fullness, a king [**Antichrist**] shall arise, having fierce features, who understands sinister schemes.

²⁴His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power [**but by demonic power**]; he shall

destroy fearfully, and shall prosper and thrive; he shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people.²⁵ Through his cunning he shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; and he shall exalt himself in his heart. He shall destroy many in their prosperity. He shall even rise against the Prince of princes [**Jesus**]; but he shall be broken without human means [**by God's power**]. (Dan. 8:23-25)

A king shall arise: The Antichrist shall arise as a king when transgressors reach their fullness, or when sin reaches its greatest measures of perversion in all history (8:23; 11:36).

Fullness of transgression: Sin will reach the greatest heights ever known in history in the generation in which Jesus returns (Dan. 8:23; 12:10; Mt. 13:30; 1 Thes. 2:16; Rev. 9:20-21; 14:18; 17:4; 18:5).

⁵The earth is defiled under its inhabitants, because they have transgressed...⁶ Therefore the curse has devoured the earth...the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men are left. (Isa. 24:5-6)

Fierce features: The Antichrist will have fierce features (8:23). Some translations refer here to his bold or strong countenance—cruelty. He will be resolute in his cruelty without any capacity for compassion or mercy. His most prominent name in Scripture is the Beast, because he thinks like a wild beast. He is called the Beast 36 times in the book of Revelation to convince us that it will be impossible to negotiate with him for mercy. He will be the most cruel man in history.

Sinister schemes: He will discern the evil motives of men and solve complex problems (8:23). This will include the spiritual realm (occult) and the natural realm of politics, war, and economics, etc. He will solve complex problems by receiving supernatural, demonic insight.

Mighty power: The Antichrist's power shall be mighty (8:24). The Antichrist's source of power will be satanic (Rev. 13:2). He will not be limited to human power and abilities. The Antichrist will be fully human and fully demonized. Some suggest that he will be "Satan incarnate."

Satan will give power and great authority to the Antichrist to do great miracles.

²The dragon [**Satan**] gave him [**Antichrist**] his power, his throne, and great authority. (Rev. 13:2)

⁹The coming of the lawless one [**Antichrist**] is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders... (2 Thes. 2:9)

He will ascend from the bottomless pit (Rev. 11:7; 17:8).

⁷...the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war... (Rev. 11:7)

⁸The beast...will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. (Rev. 17:8)

Destroy fearfully: He will destroy in a fearful way and on an unprecedented level (8:24). Here, the Hebrew word for *fearfully* means "unique." He will use unique ways to kill in large numbers, and will use fearful methods to produce terror.

²³...fourth beast shall...devour the whole earth, trample it and break it in pieces." (Dan. 7:23)

Destroy the mighty: He will not be afraid to kill the mighty—the most prominent world leaders (politics, finances, science, etc.)—and beloved public figures (8:24).

Destroy the holy people: He will kill Jewish people as well as members of the Body of Christ (Dan. 7:21, 25; 8:24; 11:33-35; 12:7, 10; Rev. 6:9-11; 7:9, 14; 9:21; 11:7; 13:7, 15; 16:5-7; 17:6; 18:24; 19:2; 20:4; Mt. 10:21-22, 28; 24:9; Lk. 12:4-7; 21:16-19; Jn. 15:18-16:4).

⁷It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. (Rev. 13:7)

Destroy many wealthy people: The Antichrist shall destroy many people who are rich (8:25). He will not be afraid to kill the rich, because he will not need their favor to succeed like most politicians do. The rich should not be confident that their wealth will protect them from the Antichrist, for he has no capacity for kindness or mercy.

¹⁶...the ten horns...on the beast...hate the harlot...and burn her with fire. (Rev. 17:16)

Cunning: His propaganda will be cleverly devised to deceive multitudes. He will use the arts, media, and music to make his message convincing. Cunning is the crafty use of special skill or knowledge that is characterized by trickery. Deceit and cunning will be his chief weapons. He will present himself as a man of peace, but will cause many wars and great destruction.

He will cause deceit to prosper: He will convince the multitudes with lies that are backed up by demonic signs to confirm them.

⁹The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,
¹⁰and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish...
(2 Thes. 2:9-10)

Prosper and thrive: The Antichrist shall prosper and thrive (8:24). He shall temporarily thrive politically, militarily, and financially, even while doing evil and destroying people. His power and wealth will increase as his armies conquer more nations. What he does will seem to be blessed by God. Many will assume the prosperity is a sign of God's blessing on him. This will give them confidence to join him. He will seem totally invincible to the nations (Rev. 13:4).

⁴They worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" (Rev. 13:4)

He shall exalt himself: Every plan in his heart will be to promote himself, and he will have an unholy boldness in his own wisdom and ways.

The Antichrist will be so self-exalting that he will have boldness without any fear of consequences or reprisals for his ruthless attacks on other nations. Even the boldest leaders in history had some fear of the consequences of their action.

³⁶“The king [**Antichrist**]...shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods...” (Dan. 11:36)

Paul made reference to Daniel's prophecies of the Antichrist exalting himself as high as God (8:11) and above God (11:36) in claiming to be God (2 Thes. 2:4).

⁴[**The Antichrist**]...exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. (2 Thes. 2:4)

Rise against Jesus: The Antichrist will stand against Jesus as the Prince of princes (8:11, 25).

²⁵“...he shall even rise against the Prince of princes [Jesus]...” (Dan. 8:25)

¹¹He even exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host... (Dan. 8:11)

³⁶“The king shall...speak blasphemies against the God of gods.” (Dan. 11:36)

⁶Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name... (Rev. 13:6)

Broken: The Antichrist will be destroyed in a supernatural way (8:25). He will be broken without human intervention. No man's hand will be involved in destroying the Antichrist. His army will be destroyed by the

sword “from the mouth of” Jesus, and he will be cast alive into the lake of fire (Rev. 19:20-21; Dan. 7:26; 11:45).

Daniel described the Antichrist’s judgment four times, prophesying that he will be *consumed, destroyed, and broken without human means* (i.e., by divine intervention), and that no military alliance will be able to *help him* or to support or rescue him from God’s judgment (7:11, 26; 8:25; 11:45).

¹¹I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame. (Dan. 7:11)

²⁶They shall take away his [**Antichrist’s**] dominion, to consume and destroy it forever. (Dan. 7:26)

²⁵He shall rise against the Prince [**Jesus**]...but he shall be broken without human means. (Dan. 8:25)

⁴⁵...yet he [**Antichrist**] shall come to his end, and no one will help him. (Dan 11:45)

⁸The lawless one [**Antichrist**] will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. (2 Thes. 2:8)

²⁰The beast was captured...cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. (Rev. 19:20)

Summary: The Antichrist will be the most powerful political leader in history:

Military genius (tactics/strategy) – Dan. 8:24, 25; 11:38-39; Rev. 6:2; 13:2,16

Oratorical genius (moves masses of people) – Dan. 11:32, 36; 8:23

Political genius (diplomacy) – Dan. 7:23; 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 13:8, 12; 17:11-12

Commercial genius (prosperity) – Dan. 8:9, 24; 11:36, 43; Rev. 13:16-17

Religious genius (doctrines and history) – 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 13:4, 8, 12

Intellectual genius (science, math, technology, languages, etc.) – Dan. 7:25; 8:23

Occult genius (demonology, miracles, human sacrifice) – Dan. 8:24; 11:39; Rev. 13

the Importance of the vision (Dan. 8:26-27)

Gabriel affirmed the vision, and Daniel was overwhelmed by what he saw (8:26-27).

²⁶The vision of the evenings and mornings...is true; therefore seal up the vision, for it refers to many days in the future. ²⁷I, Daniel, fainted and was sick for days; afterward I arose and went about the king’s business. I was astonished by the vision, but no one understood it.

(Dan. 8:26-27)

The vision of the evenings and mornings: Gabriel’s name for the vision of the 2,300 days (8:14).

It is true: Gabriel declared that what Daniel saw was true (8:26). This was meant to emphasize the importance and reliability of the vision. In other words, the persecution of Israel will surely come. This is similar to the mighty angel swearing that the trouble was coming in Daniel 12:7.

⁷...he [**the angel**]...swore...that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time [**3½ years**]; and when the power of

the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished. (Dan. 12:7)

Seal the vision: Gabriel told Daniel to seal or preserve the vision (8:26). Because it was about things that would happen many days in the future. The saints in the end times would need this revelation.

To seal up the vision meant to write and preserve it, not to make it secret (7:28; 12:9).

The word "seal" does not mean to hide but to shut it up so as to preserve it. No other Prophet's are told to make sure their vision is sealed except John

Daniel was sick: He fainted and was sick for days (8:27). Daniel was impacted more by this vision than the other visions because of the severe persecution coming to Israel. If this vision does not make us sick then we have not understood it

Daniel was astonished: As he thought over the vision for many days, he continued to be astonished by what he saw.

Daniel's work: After taking a few days to recover, he went back to work with the king's business

Understanding the vision: No one fully understood the vision (8:27). Even with the help of Gabriel personally interpreting the vision to Daniel, there were still many implications that Daniel did not fully understand. Daniel told the vision to others but none of them understood it.