



Truth For These Times



49. PROPHETIC SYMBOLS OF DANIEL 8

The eighth chapter of Daniel reviews briefly the rise and fall of the kingdoms dealt with in more detail in chapters 2 and 7, but it also predicts the severity of the persecutions of God's true and faithful people by pagan and papal Rome. However, the most important part of the chapter is in verse 14, which gives a remarkable time prophecy concerning the sanctuary and its cleansing. This prophecy is of significant importance to us today, because we are living in the time of its fulfillment. The angel Gabriel said to Daniel, "the vision *refers* to the time of the end" verse 17. The theme of this chapter is: "The redemption and deliverance of the people of God".

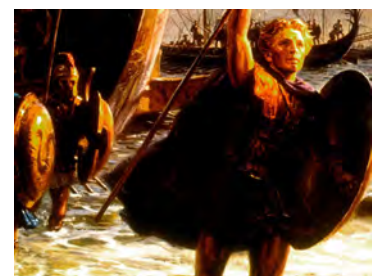
Daniel 8:1,3,4

In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar A VISION APPEARED TO ME—to me, Daniel—after the one that appeared to me the first time. Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and THERE, STANDING BESIDE THE RIVER, WAS A RAM WHICH HAD TWO HORNS, and the two horns *were* high; but one *was* higher than the other, and the higher *one* came up last. I saw the ram pushing westward, northward, and southward, so that NO ANIMAL COULD WITHSTAND HIM; nor *was there any* that could deliver from his hand, but he did according to his will and became great.

The ram in this vision is symbolic of Medo-Persia. Verse 20 is clear on this point when Gabriel said "The Ram which you saw—*they are* the kings of Media and Persia." The two horns represent the two kings, the higher horn referring to Persia that grew to be the strongest part of the kingdom. Beasts represent kingdoms and horns represent kings. See Daniel 7:23,24. No earthly powers could stand before these mighty people as they conquered in every direction they went. They conquered Babylon, Syria, Asia Minor and Greece. They overran Colchis, Armenia and Seythia in the north. Part of Arabia, Egypt and Ethiopia were subdued in the south. Thus they were the undisputed rulers of the world.

Daniel 8:5-7

And as I was considering, suddenly A MALE GOAT CAME FROM THE WEST, across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat *had* a NOTABLE HORN BETWEEN HIS EYES. Then he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing beside the river, and ran at him with furious power. And I SAW HIM CONFRONTING THE RAM; he was moved with rage against him, ATTACKED THE RAM, AND BROKE HIS TWO HORNS. There was no power in the ram to withstand him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled him; and there was no one that could deliver the ram from his hand.



The Goat symbolized the conquest of Greece.

The he goat in the vision symbolizes the kingdom of Greece as explained in verse 21 – "The male goat is the kingdom of Greece. The large horn...*is* the first king." The king of Greece was the well-known historical figure – Alexander the Great. Alexander claimed to be the offspring of Jupiter Ammon, whose symbol was a goat. His strength and speed of conquest are aptly described in his notable overthrow of the ram. Alexander first vanquished the generals of Darius at the river Granicus in Phrygia. He next attacked and routed Darius at the passes

of Issus in Cilicia, and afterward defeated him on the plains of Arbela in Syria. This battle occurred in 331 B.C. and marked the fall of the Persian Empire. Horns are also a symbol of strength and the breaking of the horns suggests the loss of power previously held by Medo-Persia.

Daniel 8:8 Therefore the male goat grew very great; but **WHEN HE BECAME STRONG, THE LARGE HORN WAS BROKEN**, and **IN PLACE OF IT FOUR NOTABLE ONES** came up toward the four winds of heaven.

Here is emphasized the sudden fall of Alexander. He was the large horn that was broken. This mighty warrior died at the age of thirty-three, partly because of his overexertions in conquering the world, and partly from a fever caused by his intemperate living. After a drunken debauch he was seized with a violent fever and died eleven days later, June 13, 323 B.C. Before he died he was asked who should rule the kingdom. His reply was “let it go to the strongest!” Alexander’s brother and two infant sons were declared rulers of the empire, but they were soon murdered and the family of Alexander became extinct. Thus there were twenty years of strife between the generals of Alexander as they struggled for the supremacy. Ultimately the empire was divided into four kingdoms, paralleling the four notable horns. Macedonia was ruled by Cassander, Thrace and Asia Minor by Lysimachus, Syria by Seleucus and Egypt by Ptolemy.



Large horn on Goat symbolized Alexander the Great.

Daniel 8:9-12 And out of one of them came **A LITTLE HORN** which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the *Glorious Land*. And **IT GREW UP TO THE HOST OF HEAVEN**; and it cast down *some* of the host and *some* of the stars to the ground, and trampled them. He even exalted *himself* as high as the Prince of the host; and **BY HIM THE DAILY SACRIFICES WERE TAKEN AWAY**, and the place of His sanctuary was cast down. Because of transgression, an army was given over *to the horn* to oppose the daily *sacrifices*; and **HE CAST TRUTH DOWN TO THE GROUND. HE DID ALL THIS AND PROSPERED.**

Here is the antichrist, symbolized by the little horn. This power was clearly identified in the study of [Daniel chapter 7](#). It arose out of pagan Rome and became known as papal Rome.

ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES



A little horn arose out of one of the four horns.

Some have mistaken the little horn to be Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria who was a great enemy and persecutor of the Jews. But as we will see, it cannot be so, because he does not fit into the details of the prophecy.

First of all the little horn grew out of one of the four horns of the goat making him distinct from the other horns. Antiochus symbolized the horn of Syria, being the eighth king out of the twenty-six kings of this nation. Antiochus did not “grow” out of the Syrian horn – he was a “representative” of that horn. The little horn was to wax exceeding great – Antiochus did not. Also the little horn was to stand up against the Prince of princes (i.e. Jesus Christ) (see Dan 9:25 & Rev 1:5) but

Antiochus died one hundred and sixty four years before our Lord was born. The prophecy cannot apply to him because he does not fulfill the specifications in any particular. Neither can the 2300

days of verse 14 be made to fit Antiochus in any way. Why do many apply it to him? Many Roman Catholics take this view to avoid the application of this prophecy to their great system, and many Protestants blindly follow.

THE LITTLE HORN DENOTES ROME

For a full identification of the “little horn” see the study on [Daniel 7](#). We do notice however, that the little horn “grew up to the host of heaven.” And this was certainly true of Rome. It grew out of pagan Rome and became great not by conquest but by religious dominance combined with the power of the state.

Notice the following specifications that identify the “little horn” of this chapter.

1. Grew exceedingly great. Verse 9 – Greater than Medo-Persia or Greece.
2. Towards South, East and Glorious *land*. Verse 9 – Arose and conquered from the NORTH WEST.
3. Understands sinister schemes. Verse 23 – Introduction of the false doctrine by double meanings.
4. He shall destroy the mighty and holy people. Verse 24 – Persecuted the true people of God.
5. Rise against the prince of princes. Verses 11,25 – Christ the special target of attack.
6. Cast down the truth and the sanctuary. Verses 11,12 – False teaching concerning Christ’s sacrifice.
7. By him daily *sacrifice* taken away. Verse 11 – Presentation of a false gospel.
8. Prospered and thrived until the time of the end. Verses 12,24,17 – Continued until the latter days.

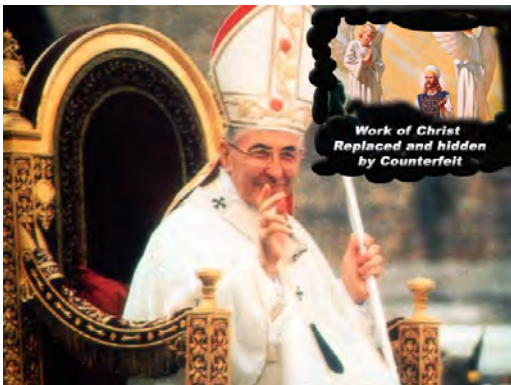


The Papacy is the Little Horn of Daniel Eight.

Rome and Rome only fits this historical picture. Without doubt it is the “little horn” of Daniel 8.

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF TAKING AWAY THE DAILY SACRIFICE?

The “taking away of the daily sacrifice” refers to a counterfeit of the true “daily.” In the Old Testament sanctuary the shed blood of the daily sacrifice was for the forgiveness of sin. The slain lamb represented Jesus, the Lamb of God. This one sacrifice of our Lord was sufficient for all time. Since the cross, Jesus has been doing His mediatorial work in the heavenly sanctuary. See the study on [The Judgment](#). Notice the subtle counterfeit in the following statements.



1. **A Counterfeit Sanctuary** – The Roman Catholic church has usurped the place of Christ’s “true tabernacle” in heaven by claiming to forgive sin through the confessional.
2. **A Counterfeit Sacrifice** – The “sacrifice of the mass” has usurped the place of Christ’s true, “once for all” sacrifice.
3. **A Counterfeit Law** – The removal of the second commandment and the removal of the Creator’s name from the fourth commandment.

4. **A Counterfeit Priesthood** – Human priests who are exalted as “gods”, “christs”, and “creators of their Creator” have usurped the place of Christ, our true High Priest.
5. **A Counterfeit Mediator** – Mary has usurped the place of Christ, and is declared to be a more compassionate, accessible and effectual mediatrix than Jesus Himself.
6. **A Counterfeit “Vicar of Christ”** – The Pope has usurped the place of the Holy Spirit as the infallible Teacher of Divine Truth, and the true Successor of Christ on earth.
7. **A Counterfeit way of Salvation** – Salvation by works – prayers, payments, pilgrimages, penances etc. – has usurped the place of salvation by God’s free grace.

The vision of Daniel 8 is not a political or sectarian issue; neither is it a conflict between nations or denominations; it is far bigger than any of these. The “taking away of the daily” is a highly organised, world-wide attempt to neutralise the saving provisions of God, and to dethrone Christ as man’s only effective Mediator! See 1 Timothy 2:5

Daniel 8:13,14 Then I heard a holy one speaking; and *another* holy one said to that certain *one* who was speaking, “HOW LONG WILL THE VISION BE, concerning the daily *sacrifices* and the transgression of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled under foot?” And he said to me, “FOR TWO THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED DAYS; THEN THE SANCTUARY SHALL BE CLEANSED.”

For more detail on the 2300 days, see the study on [the 2300-day prophecy](#) and [the judgment](#). It is no wonder the heavenly watchers were alarmed and anxiously asked, “How long *will* the vision *be*?” No wonder it seemed to be too much for Daniel and he “fainted and was sick for days.” The dominance of this antichrist power and the persecution of God’s people were almost too much to bear. The meaning of this prophecy was not understood in this chapter. The final verse says clearly that none understood the vision. Daniel understood all features of the vision explained to him, except the 2300 days. Daniel 9 reveals the meaning of the first 70 weeks of the 2300 days. Daniel 8:14 tells us what happens at the close of the 2300 days – the sanctuary would be “cleansed” or “justified” (margin) indicating judgment. This was the beginning of a worldwide movement proclaiming God’s judgment hour message, and the beginning of the investigative judgment in heaven.



Little Horn Power exposed and condemned in the heavenly Judgment that began in 1844.

Daniel 8:15-19 Then it happened, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and was seeking the meaning, that suddenly there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. And I heard a man’s voice between *the banks of* the Ulai, who called, and said, “Gabriel, MAKE THIS *MAN* UNDERSTAND THE VISION.” So he came near where I stood, and when he came I was afraid and fell on my face; but he said to me, “Understand, son of man, that THE VISION *REFERS* TO THE TIME OF THE END.” Now, as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me, and stood me upright. And 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*.”

The vision of Medo-Persia and Greece were not in the “time of the end”, but the fulfillment of the 2300 days was.

Daniel 8:20-22 THE RAM which you saw, having the two horns—*they ARE THE KINGS OF MEDIA AND PERSIA*. And the MALE GOAT *IS THE KINGDOM OF GREECE*. The large horn that *is* between its eyes *is* the first king. As 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.

Daniel 8 leaves us in no doubt as to the identity of the ram and the goat, also the four kingdoms arising from the break up of the Grecian empire.

Daniel 8:23-25 And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors have reached their fullness, **A KING SHALL ARISE, HAVING FIERCE FEATURES, WHO UNDERSTANDS SINISTER SCHEMES. HIS POWER SHALL BE MIGHTY**, but not by his own power; he shall destroy fearfully, and shall prosper and thrive; **HE SHALL DESTROY THE MIGHTY, AND ALSO THE HOLY PEOPLE**. 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**; but he shall be broken without *human* means.



As in the Dark Ages, this persecuting power will persecute God's people again.

Satan has used the “little horn” power as a weapon in the spiritual warfare between truth and error.

He has made an attack on –

1. The law of God.
2. The daily sacrifices.
3. God's people – or the church.

In the investigative judgment we see –

1. God's character vindicated.
2. The church vindicated.
3. The true gospel vindicated.

This by no means indicates an end of the spiritual battle, but it ushers in a new day when the truth of God has been restored in the earth and God's people preach the true gospel on a worldwide basis. Antichrist verses Christ is basis of Daniel 8; a battle that will continue until the end. Millions were martyred by antichrist during the Dark Ages; a fulfilment of the words “shall destroy the mighty and holy people.” Persecution will no doubt arise again when all are forced to worship the beast and his image.

Daniel 8:26,27 And **THE VISION OF THE EVENINGS AND MORNINGS WHICH WAS TOLD IS TRUE**; therefore seal up the vision, for *it refers to many days in the future.*” And I, 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.**



God's Church will triumph over the beast. Will you hold fast to Christ and reject His counterfeit?

Gabriel, in obedience to God's command, explained to Daniel the meaning of the Ram, Male Goat, and the Little Horn. But the most puzzling feature of the vision – the 2,300 days of verse 14 was left unexplained. Daniel's aging physical frame was unable to endure such strain and he fainted and was sick for a number of days. Gabriel returned at a future time to give an explanation, which is outlined in Daniel 9.

This portion of Scripture has been given to us for a reason. The antichrist has been revealed to us that we might be saved from its deceptive and false teachings, also to encourage us

that God has the final say and that the victory and deliverance will come to God's faithful people at last. There are only two sides in the battle – truth and error. Dear friend, determine today that you will take your stand on the winning side – the side of Jesus – the side of truth.

Review Sheet – Prophetic Symbols of Daniel 8

ASSIGNMENT: Read the Bible study carefully before answering the following questions.

1. (a) What did Daniel first see in vision in Daniel 8:1-4?
(b) What did the ram represent?
Answer: (a) There stood before the river _____
(b) _____
2. What did Daniel see after the ram and what happened to the ram? Daniel 8:5-7
Answer: _____
3. What kingdom does the goat represent?
Answer: _____
4. Explain the significance of the broken horn and the four notable horns. Daniel 8:8
Answer: _____
5. How great did the “little horn” become? Daniel 8:9-12
A little horn --- and it grew up ____ _
6. What acts were performed by the “little horn”?
Answer: _____
7. When was the oppression of God’s people to take a turn? Daniel 8:13,14
He said to me, “_____”
8. To what period of earth’s history does the 2300-day prophecy have its fulfillment?
Daniel 8:15-19
“Understand, son of man, _____”
9. How bitter is the battle waged by the “little horn” against truth? Daniel 8:23-25
Answer: _____
10. Who finally wins the battle? Daniel 8:25
Even rise against the Prince of princes; _____
11. What part of the vision was not explained to Daniel? Daniel 8:26,27
When was it eventually explained?
Answer : _____
12. List a number of teachings taught by the Roman Catholic Church that are not taught in the Bible?
Answer: _____

Have you chosen to stand on the side of Bible truth? YES _____ NO _____