

Daniel 8:1-27 (NASB) Notes

⇒ From chapter 8 to the end of the book of Daniel, the text is written in Hebrew again ... why?

- This vision of Daniel warns of another crisis that would occur in less than 400 years after his lifetime – the persecutions of a madman named Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175 – 163 BC).

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. • cf., **ch. 7**

⇒ Babylon is not referenced in this vision ... why not?

- Daniel is about 69 or 70 yrs old. Within a dozen years, Babylon would fall to the Persians. The “400 silent years” between the O.T. and N.T. are detailed in advance with such clarity and accuracy that skeptics have “late-dated” Daniel.

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.

- Susa was located about 230 miles southeast of Babylon, and 150 miles north of the Persian Gulf. It becomes the winter residence/capitol of the Persian kings (*Neh. 1:1; Esther 1:2*). The Code of Hammurabi was found there in 1901 (1772 B.C.).

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.

- cf., **v. 20**. The Persian king, at the head of his army, wore the head of a ram, instead of a crown.

- Centuries before Cyrus of Persia appeared on the scene, the prophet Isaiah called him by name, plus referred to him as God’s “shepherd” and “anointed” (*Isa. 44:28 – 45:4*). He was kind to those he took captive; he even permitted the Jews to return to their land to rebuild the temple (*2Chron. 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-11; 6:2-5*).

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.

- cf., **v. 21**.

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.

- cf., vv. 22-25.

- At the age of 20, Alexander the Great succeeded his father, Philip of Macedon. He was enraged at the Persians for having defeated the Greeks at the Battle of Marathon (490 B.C.) and the Battle of Salamis (481 B.C.). Six years later he had conquered the Persian Empire, and by the age of 30 his empire stretched from the Mediterranean to the Hindu Kush, an empire of 1.5 million square miles. But at the pinnacle of his career, he contracted a severe fever (possibly malaria) and died on June 13, 323 B.C. at the age of 32/33. He left two sons, Alexander IV and Herakles, both of whom were murdered.

- After 22 years of infighting, the empire was subdivided among four Greek military leaders: Cassander, who was married to Alexander's sister (Macedonia & Greece); Lysimachus, a boyhood tutor (Thrace, Bithynia, most of Asia Minor); Seleucus, one of Philip's generals (Syria east to India); Ptolemy, a boyhood friend (Egypt, Cyrene, Arabia Petraea, parts of Asia Minor).

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**.

- **"Beautiful Land"** – reference to Palestine, the geography of Israel.

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**.

- **"host of heaven"** – people of God (Gen.15:5; 22:17; Dan.8:24).
- **"trampled"** – severe persecution.

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.

⇒ In 8:12, one of the horns of the male goat (Greece) *"flings truth to the ground"* ... what do you think this means? (cf., v. 25)

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.

- **"fling truth to the ground"** = *"The books of the law which they found they tore to pieces and burned with fire"* (1 Macc.1:56-57).

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.”

- **“2,300 evenings mornings”** – Either six years, when Antiochus deposed the high priest Onias (170 BC) to when Judas Maccabeus re-dedicated the temple (165 BC); or three years, from the erecting of the altar to Zeus (168) until Maccabeus (165).

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.

⇒ **Daniel is an example for students of prophecy: Ask God for understanding; then allow Him to instruct.**

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.”

- **“Gabriel”** (gaber = man; El = God) means “*man of God*.” He is a divine messenger. Centuries later, he appears to Zechariah to announce the birth of John the Baptist (Lk.1:11-20); then to Mary to announce the birth of the Messiah (Lk.1:26-38). The only other angel named in Scripture is **Michael** (“Who is like God?”), who is depicted as a warrior archangel who often battles directly with Satan (Dan.10:13,21; 12:1; Jude 9; Rev.12:7).

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.” *Used 93x in Ezekiel.

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

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

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

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

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

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.”

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.

• **Antiochus IV** – the 8th ruler of the Seleucid Greek Empire (175 – 163 BC)

- 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.)
- 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; made Jerusalem a buffer state; plundered & desecrated the Temple.
- He called himself *Epiphanes*, “the Illustrious One”; the Jews called him *Epimanes*, “the Madman.”
- He desired to turn the Jews into good Greeks, prohibiting them from honoring the Sabbath, practicing circumcision, and following Levitical dietary laws. His persecution climaxed in 168 B.C. when he sent an army of 20,000 men under Apollonius to level Jerusalem; entering the city on the Sabbath, murdering most of the men, and capturing the women and children as slaves. On Dec. 14, 168 B.C., he placed an altar to Zeus in the Jerusalem temple, and sacrificed a pig on it!
- Three years later (12/14/165 B.C.), Judas Maccabeus and his followers delivered Jerusalem, purified the temple, and restored the altar of burnt offering ... celebrated as the “Feast of Lights” ... Hanukkah (Jn.10:22). Antiochus later went mad while in Persia, and died in 163 B.C.

• **A Type of the Antichrist (cf. v.25):**

1. “He will cause deceit to succeed by his influence” (He shall cause craft to prosper in his hand - KJV). No man will be able to buy or sell except the one who has the mark of the beast (**Rev.13:17**).
2. “He will magnify himself in his heart.” He is given a mouth speaking blasphemies, with power to continue 42 months (**Rev.13:5; 2Thess.2:1-12**).
3. “He will destroy many while they are at ease.” The rider on the white horse; then comes the red horse of war – thus, a false peace (**Rev.6:3-4**)
4. “He will even oppose the Prince of princes.” The 1st beast of **Rev.13:1-10** is against Christ.

• **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**)

⇒ **Biblical revelations of the future are given by God to His people to exhort faithfulness, to encourage during difficult days, and to comfort in suffering.**