

Daniel's
EYES

ON THE

Future

Another view of the history of empires and kingdoms was brought before Daniel in vision. In this vision he saw a prophetic period which reaches to the later days, touching events of our time that are of direct interest and importance to everyone living today. Again, as in the previous vision- the scenes of history passed before Daniel's vision-earthy kingdoms were represented under the symbols of beasts. In the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, recorded in the second chapter of Daniel, the Lord revealed in brief but graphic details the course of history.

DANIEL'S VISION OF THE RAM AND THE GOAT

The four great world monarchies were represented by various parts of the metallic image. That prophecy described the division of the Roman Empire into the kingdoms of western Europe. In Daniel's vision of the four beasts in chapter 7, we are taken over the same course of history with more precise details. Special emphasis is placed on the fourth great kingdom-especially its divided state; for the events taking place at this time (our time) are of deepest eternal interest to all people. The vision of chapter 8 continues with the same theme as chapters 2 and 7.

In chapter 8 Media-Persia and Greece are mentioned by name, avoiding any questions concerning the nations involved in these symbols.

The light that Daniel received direct from God was given especially for these last days. The visions he saw by the banks of the Ulai and the Hiddekel, the great river of Shinar, are now in process of fulfilment, and all the events foretold will soon have come to pass. {TM 112.3}

Daniel 8:1 In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, *even unto me* Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first.

This chapter presents a prophecy that further describes the rise of the Medo-Persian and Greece Empires, which eventually succeeded the Babylonian Empire. Daniel recorded this as his second vision, about two years after the vision recorded in chapter seven.

Daniel 8:2 And I saw in a vision; and it came to pass, when I saw, that I was at Shushan *in the palace, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai.* The scene of this vision was in Shushan the palace, one of the royal seats of the kings of Persia, situated on the banks of the river Ulai, which surrounded the city in the province of Elam, that part of Persia which lay next to Babylon. Daniel was not there in person, he



was in Babylon under the leadership of Belshazzar-this is a vision.

Daniel 8:3 Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had *two* horns: and the *two* horns were high; but one *was* higher than the other, and the higher came up last.

Daniel 8:4 I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither *was there any* that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great.

This portion of Daniel's vision historically corresponds with the military excursions of Cyrus, King of Persia (represented by the larger of the two horns), whose conquered territories extended west into Babylon, Syria, and Asia; north into Albania, Armenia, and Iberia; and south into Arabia, Ethiopia, and Egypt. Therefore, the animals mentioned in this verse evidently represent the territories conquered by King Cyrus; This verse evidently represent the territories conquered by King Cyrus. The two horns represent the dual character of the empire-first the Medes and then the Persians rising to greater power.

Daniel 8:5 And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat *had* a notable horn between his eyes.

As Daniel ponder in the vision, something else unfolded. A male goat with a notable horn between its eyes approached from the west. In describing the great speed and power with which the goat advanced, Daniel noted that the goat did not touch the ground.

Daniel 8:6 And he came to the ram that had *two* horns, which I had seen

ran unto him in

Daniel 8:7 And ram, and he him, and smote horns: and



to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand.

standing before the river, and the fury of his power.

I saw him come close unto the was moved with choler against the ram, and brake his two there was no power in the ram

A ram's protection depends upon the strength of its horns so this renders the ram defenceless. The goat then tossed the ram to the ground and crushed it. As this verse indicates, no person or group of persons could aid or rescue the ram because of the goat's overpowering strength and speed.

Comparable to the rough goat in this passage, Satan seeks to kill and to destroy us, both physically and spiritually, and he preys upon the areas in which we are most vulnerable. What do we rely on as our primary defence weapon against his attacks? Ephesians 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Ephesian 6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to

stand against the wiles of the devil.

Ephesians 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. If we rely on our own strength to overcome him, we will certainly meet with defeat.

Therefore, we must daily arm ourselves with prayer and bible study in order to be prepared for the battle ahead.

Daniel 8:8 Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven.

The rough goat is later on identified by the angel -as Greece-the notable horn is Alexander the first Grecian king. Under Alexander the leader-Greece came upon Persia with great fury-none was able to deliver the Persians. Therefore the he goat waxed very great and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable horns towards the four winds of heaven.



The young and energetic Alexander was suddenly cut down by death at the age of 32, just as he was preparing to celebrate at Babylon.

Following Alexander's death-the empire was divided towards the four winds of heaven, meaning east, west, north and south. There was no descendants of Alexander and so the empire was divided between four of his generals. Greece and neighbouring countries controlled by - Cassander

Asia Minor -Lysimachus
Syria and Babylon-Seleucus
Egypt-Ptolemy

As Daniel watched these Greece-he saw another through one of them in the horn, which waxed the south-the east and land, which was Israel at



four kingdoms of divided power coming up form of another little exceeding great, towards the pleasant the time.

Daniel 8:9 And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land.

This little horn is a symbol of Imperial Rome. Media Persia was "great," Grecia was "very great," but this power was "exceeding great." As in chapter seven, this verse speaks of the rise of a "little horn" among the other horns. However, this little horn does not represent the same figure as the little horn mentioned in the previous chapter. How do we know this to be true? Notice that this horn arose from among four horns, not ten.



Furthermore, we can ascertain that the prophecies of this vision and Daniel's first vision refer to different time periods. Both little horns, however, have proven and will prove to be extremely hostile toward the children of God.

In this vision the little horn came out of the four that the prophet was watching-Rome rose to supremacy out of its conquest of Macedonia, one of the notable horns (kingdoms) into which Grecia was divided. It spread forth towards to south, and the east and towards the pleasant land. Palestine became a province of the Empire of Rome a century before Christ came.

Daniel 8:10 And it waxed great, *even* to the host of heaven; and it cast down *some* of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them.

This small horn achieved greatness until it came up against the army of heaven. The word army in this verse mean "a mass group of people, especially organized for war." With this in mind, this verse most definitely depicts the brutal persecution that this small horn would inflict upon the Jews, God's people, called "the army of heaven." It doesn't mean that this host signifies angels, as some expositors have suggested. The interpretation of this prophecy, is given in later verses, which discusses an actual, physical series of events.

Daniel 8:11 Yea, he magnified *himself* even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily *sacrifice* was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down.

The small horn would magnify himself even against Christ. John 19:10-11 (KJV) Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? [11] Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

This horn power would seize control over the holy temple in Jerusalem, and would then forbid the daily sacrifices that took place there. By these actions, he would prohibit the Jews from practicing the religious ordinances that distinguished them as a people. He would also cleverly coerce their allegiance to him.

Daniel 8:12 And an host was given *him* against the daily *sacrifice* by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered.

The truth was cast down and ungodliness prevailed as the small horn was permitted to continue his horrible acts against God's people. Furthermore, he was given "an army" to enforce these policies that forbade the Jews from worshipping in the temple and mandated its desecration. "The horn was successful in everything it did." It practised evil and prospered.

Daniel 8:13 Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said

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

In this vision, the evil ruler wickedness against God's people even disrupting the worship of God Almighty is explained.

It's difficult to understand why God would allow the desolation of His temple worship and the persecution of His servants to occur. Why does a good God allow bad things to happen to "good" people? This is a natural question that has universally confront every person at one time or another. However, there is need for great caution in this question. Romans 11:33 (KJV) O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! Rather than focusing on "why," we must focus on the "Who." It is important to understand, as fully as possible, Who God is, by recognizing that He is both sovereign and good. God is the Potter, the Creator, and we are the clay, the creation that he lovingly fashioned. Whether we accept or reject God's supremacy does not alter His position as the Most High. God is sovereign, so He does not need a reason for doing anything that He chooses to do because all of His actions are, by His very nature, perfect. Romans 9:20 (KJV) Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Almighty God, in His goodness, coupled with His great love for us and His great hatred for sin, allows and even causes affliction to happen, even to His very own if that will further mold them into His image. Many situations that appear to be dreadful are actually God's hand working in our spiritual, physical, and emotional best interest. When I say that God is good, that God has a kind heart, I mean that He has a heart infinitely kind and that there is no boundary to it.... God is not only infinitely good, He is perfectly good. God is never part-way anything.... If you don't feel that way about it, it's unbelief that makes you feel otherwise; it's preoccupation with this world. If you would believe God, you would know this to be true. Since we can never fully comprehend or define the perfect sovereignty or goodness of Almighty God, our Christian growth comes in learning to praise the Lord simply because of Who He is and to trust in His constant goodness. Isaiah 64:8 (KJV) But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand. Sufferings and afflictions cannot be explained but we must remember that even Christ suffered at the hands of Rome.

Daniel 8:14 And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed. On one occasion Jesus reminded His disciples of this prophecy of Daniel. Matthew 24:15. This two thousand three hundred days will be explained later.

Gabriel comforts Daniel and interprets the vision.

Daniel 8:15 And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man. By man's standards, Daniel's abilities qualified him as an expert dream and vision interpreter. However, Daniel sought his answers from the all-knowing God. What can we learn? When Daniel searched, God responded by sending a messenger.

It was not a man but, as stated in the verse, "the appearance of a man." Through this being, God revealed to Daniel the interpretation of this prophetic vision.

Daniel 8:16 And I heard a man's voice between *the banks of Ulai*, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this *man* to understand the vision. A voice called and identified this being as Gabriel. In other biblical accounts Gabriel was sent to Jerusalem to announce the birth of John the Baptist to Zacharias (Luke 1:19), and also to Nazareth to announce to the Virgin Mary that she would give birth to the Messiah (Luke 1:26). He also appeared to Daniel on other occasions. Daniel heard a man's voice sounding from between the banks of the river. This was not the voice of the one described in the previous verse as one "who looked like a man." The voice instructed Gabriel to tell Daniel the interpretation of the vision in its entirety, so the voice apparently came from the very mouth of God, Who has command over all of the angels.

Daniel 8:17 So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end *shall be the vision*. With permission from his commander, Gabriel then moved closer to Daniel, and as he did, Daniel fell prostrate in fear before him. The angel explained that the vision is for the "end times." How this phrase is interpreted depends upon how the vision as a whole is interpreted. Some people argue that this refers to the end of the world and the time of the final antichrist. However, the "end" here refers to the promised completion of the 2300 days (explained in verse 14) that conclude the destructive-disruptive, abominable rebellion to which this entire vision relates.

Daniel 8:18 Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: but he touched me, and set me upright. While Daniel lay facedown on the ground, he fell into a deep sleep. He did not slumber due to boredom but from physical and emotional exhaustion. Then, Gabriel touched Daniel, lifted him upright, and restored his consciousness.

Daniel 8:19 And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end *shall be*. Gabriel announced that he would proclaim the meaning of the vision, and, Daniel yearned to understand the mystery. Gabriel assured Daniel that the time had been determined for the end of the persecution inflicted upon the people of God by the little horn.

Daniel 8:20 The ram which thou sawest having *two horns are the kings of Media and Persia*. Gabriel first explained the symbolic meaning of the ram and its two horns. Darius ruled as the king of Media, and Cyrus ruled as the king of Persia. The ram in the vision represents the union of these two kingdoms into the Medo-Persian Empire, which was depicted as the silver portion of the image in Nebuchadnezzar's first dream (Daniel 2:39) and the bear-like beast in Daniel's first vision (Daniel 7:5). The ram in the vision represents the union of these two kingdoms into the Medo-Persian Empire, which was depicted as the silver portion of the image in Nebuchadnezzar's first dream (Daniel 2:39) and the bear-like beast in Daniel's first vision (Daniel 7:5).

Daniel 8:21 And the rough goat *is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king*. The male goat represents the Greco-Macedonian Empire, and the horn between its eyes symbolizes the first king of that empire. This king and kingdom correspond with the brass portion of the image in Nebuchadnezzar's first dream (Daniel 2:39) and with the four-winged, four-headed leopard in Daniel's first recorded vision (Daniel 7:6).

The large horn on this goat represents Alexander the Great,

Daniel 8:22 Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power. The breaking of the horn describes the downfall of Alexander, who died in 323 b.c. at only thirty-three years of age at the height of his power and conquest. Gabriel foretold the events surrounding the division of Alexander's kingdom into four parts. Where there had once been a single king leading a single kingdom, there would now be four kings and four separate kingdoms. Historically, these four horns represent the following kings and kingdoms that succeeded Alexander (Egypt in the south)

Seleucus (Syria in the east)

Cassander (Macedonia in the northwest)

Lysimachus (Asia Minor in the northeast)

Daniel 8:23 And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, (or when wickedness is at its peak) a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, (skill in intrigue... a master of stratagem), shall stand up. On Chislew 15, 168 BC, a statue of the Greek god Zeus was erected upon the altar of burnt offering-liberal Jews assisted in this process. Ten days later, on the 25th day of the same month-they began to offer sacrifice of unclean animals on the same altar.

Three years later, the devout Jews, removed the old altar and dedicated a new one. This day is honoured as "Hanukkah," the dedication of the new altar.

It is known as the feast of dedication-John 10: 22,23. Here we see the

sanctuary service disrupted and evil reaching its peak during the time of these four kings. After these four generals ruled for some time, a new king emerged—a vicious king who stubbornly disregarded Almighty God. Aside from his imposing demeanor, this king possessed great power with which he carried out his wicked schemes. This little horn does not symbolize the end-times antichrist figure that is also depicted as a little horn in the previous chapter. The small horn in this chapter most likely represents the Roman Empire. Satan controlled this kingdom. Rome singled out and destroyed those who posed a threat to his plans and set up those who would comply as its vassals. This Man targeted anything that stood in its way, whether political, religious or any other people groups that opposed him. God allowed this man of unspeakable wickedness to prosper until God's sovereign will was accomplished in this empire.

Daniel 8:24 And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. Deception flourished under this man's administration. He exalted himself in his own prideful heart. This man rebelled against the high priest in God's holy temple, against God's chosen people, and even against the great Commander, God Almighty Himself.

He destroyed his political enemies and persecute the people of God.

Daniel 8:25 And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify *himself* in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand. Persuading many to follow pagan traditions, and exalting emperor as a divine being. substituted other sacrificial systems in place of the royal priesthood He stood up against Jesus when they crucified Him and He shall be broken without hand. In Nebuchadnezzar dream- disintegrated into ten kingdoms-out of which came the papacy (broken without hand) In Daniel dream of the four beasts –ten horns came out of it's head-then the little horn come up rooting up three of the others. In this case the horn was broken without hand-indicating that it was a peaceful transition.

Daniel 8:26 And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told *is* true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it *shall be* for many days. Gabriel concluded the first part of the vision by stating that this vision was true. He was also specific about the duration of these events lasting 2300 days. Now that the vision and its interpretation were unveiled, Gabriel told Daniel to "seal" message since the events of the prophecy were still many years away.

Daniel 8:27 And I Daniel fainted, and was sick *certain* days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood *it*. Daniel was so

intensely disturbed by the this vision that he fainted and fell ill for several days. Nevertheless, after a short while, he regained his strength and returned to his duty in the palace. The vision, however, bothered his mind and thoughts.

Think about this!

At the completion of this vision, Gabriel, God's messenger, told Daniel that the vision was true and he should seal the vision. God's instruction for Daniel to seal up the message required action on Daniel's part and proved that God employs His creation in accomplishing His will. Although Daniel lacked a detailed understanding of the vision's interpretation, he still obediently followed the angel's instructions.

What excuse do we have for disobeying the voice of our God? We either have not learned how to discern His voice, or we have chosen to disobey it. We contend that if God would only send His message to us via an angel, as He did with Daniel, we would obey Him.

God reveals His instructions to us in myriads of ways. He speaks to us through His Holy Word, yet we neglect to study it. He speaks to us through others, such as godly ministers and teachers, yet we ignore the counsel. God expects our obedience even though we may not fully understand His plan.