

THE RAM AND THE GOAT Daniel 8:1-27

Intro: Two earthly kingdoms are represented in this chapter. These two kingdoms are presented as animals: the two horned ram represents Persia (modern day Iran), and the one horned goat is representative of Greece.

Many times in the Old Testament, you have two periods of time separated by centuries in the same passage. That is the case here in Daniel eight. Picture this as two mountains and a valley in between. The first mountain is the reign of Antiochus Epiphanies who desolated the Temple in Jerusalem in December of 168 B.C. The second mountain will be the desolation of the tribulation Temple by the Anti-Christ, Revelation 19:19. These mountains are separated the valley of time.

I. Vss. 1-2, VISION BY THE RIVER

- A. Vs. 1, The second vision of Daniel, the one here in chapter eight, came around the year 551 B.C. when Daniel was about seventy.
- B. Vs. 2, Daniel is at Shushan, the capital city, 350 miles from Babylon when he receives this vision. This was the birthplace of the Medo-Persian Empire and the headquarters of Cyrus the king of Persia. Daniel is on the bank of the river as the vision unfolds.

II. Vss. 3-4, VICIOUS RAM WITH TWO HORNS

- A. Vs. 3, The ram has two horn, the shorter preceding the longer. The horns are Media and Persia. Media is the shorter and weaker; and eventually, we see the longer horn, the stronger -- Persia, rule the entire Fertile Crescent.
 - 1. The ram was the symbol of Persia.
 - 2. Persian kings wore jeweled rams' heads, not crowns, and coins had the impress of the ram on them. The guardian spirit of Persia was always symbolized by the ram.
- B. Vs. 4, Verse four is a vivid and historically accurate description of the conquests of the Persian Empire as the mighty ram butted its way west, north and south. Nothing could stop the onslaught of the ram.
 - 1. Westward – Babylon, Mesopotamia, Syria and Asia Minor.
 - 2. Northward – Colchis, Armenia, Iberian-Caspian.

3. Southward - Palestine, Egypt, Ethiopia, Libya.

III. Vss. 5-7, VICIOUSNESS OF THE HE GOAT WITH THE GREAT HORN

- A. Vs 5, As Daniel is thinking, he sees a he goat rushing quickly from the west; it came so fast its feet did not touch the ground.
- B. Vs, 6-7, The goat runs with all its fury and power toward the ram. The goat is Alexander the Great.
 - 1. In 336 B.C., at age twenty, Alexander assumed the throne of his murdered father, Philip of Macedon.
 - 2. It took Alexander just five years to take the throne at Shushan, becoming king of Persia.
 - 3. Alexander went on to explore northern India, and then back to Babylon where, in 323 B.C. living as a Oriental Monarch, he contracted fever and died at age 33.

IV. Vs. 8, VICIOUS GREAT HORN BROKEN

- A. At the death of Alexander the Great, the kingdom he had forged was broken up in four pieces.
- B.

RULER	GEOGRAPHIC REGION
Ptolemy	Egyptian area
Seleucids	Syrian area
Lysimachus	Asia Minor area
Cassander	Grecian area

V. Vss. 9-14, ISSUANCE OF THE LITTLE HORN

- A. Vs. 9, It is to be noted that the "pleasant land" spoken of here is Israel. The little horns conquests are described as being south, Egypt; east, Armenia; and again south, Palestine. This little horn is none other than Antiochus Epiphanes
- B. Vs. 10, By means of political rangeling, fraudulent practices, cruelty and military strategy he became great.
 - 1. Antiochus took for himself the title Epiphanes or, "Illustrious One." His subjects referred to him as Epimanes, "Madman".
 - 2. He tried to push the worship of Zeus throughout his

domain. Many of the stars of God or children of God, Israelites, would not worship Zeus and were murdered.

- C. Vss. 11-14, The desecration of the Temple.
 - 1. Vs. 11, In 170 B.C. Antiochus, in an effort to replenish his treasury after his Egyptian Campaign, looted the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem. Daily sacrifices ceased and thousands of Jews were slain and others were led into captivity. Freedom of religion was gone. He set himself up as a god. He went so far as to set up an image of Zeus on the brazen altar and to sacrifice a sow on the altar.
 - 2. Vs. 12, The first part of this verse tells us that Israel had sinned and was now reaping the consequence of transgression. Because of sin, they were being brought down by a pagan nation and pagan religion. "It," the rule of Antiochus, made every attempt to destroy the Book of the Law, the Bible of the Jews, which includes the Ten Commandments. Do you see any similarity with what is happening today in America?
- C. Vs. 13, How long will this go on? How long will the sacrifice be stopped, and the truth trampled down?
- D. Vs. 14, The answer to the question of verse 13 is given here. Antiochus began his reign in 171 B.C. and was driven out of Jerusalem by the Maccabees in 165 B.C. or 2300 days.

- VI. Vss. 15-19, INTERPRETED VISION AS IT RELATES TO THE END TIMES
 - A. Vs. 15-16, This is the angel Gabriel. Yes, this is the same Gabriel who shows up in the New Testament to announce the births of John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - B. Vs 17, At first, Daniel was fearful of the messenger of God. But, the angel brought words of comfort to the faithful old prophet saying: "the time of the end shall be the vision." We are coming now to the second mountain top, the time of the end.
 - C. Vss. 18-19, Daniel is touched by the angel and is set upright. Gabriel is going to speak to the prophet Daniel about the coming indignation which shall be far greater than the first abomination of desolation during the time of Antiochus Epiphanes.

VII. Vss. 20-22, INTERPRETED VISION OF THE RAM AND THE HE GOAT

- A. Vs. 20, The two horns, as we have stated, represent Medo-Persia.
- B. Vs. 21, The rough goat is the he goat of earlier verses, Alexander the Great.
- C. Vs. 22, The interpretation of this verse we have given earlier (vs. 8).

VIII. Vss. 23-26, VIVID PICTURE OF THE LITTLE HORN OF THE LATTER DAYS

- A. Vs. 23, Before the coming of the Anti-Christ the world will be engrossed in sin, "when the transgressor are come to the full."
 - 1. The Anti-Christ will be skilled in deception.
 - 2. This Anti-Christ will be fierce and push his agenda without regard of the will of the common man.
- B. Vs. 24, The power of this end time ruler will be derived from the Devil (2 Thessaloians 2:9).
 - 1. He will be destructive to what is right and good.
 - 2. At first, everything he does will prosper. This is partly because the pre-tribulation saints have been raptured and the Holy Spirit will not longer be holding this evil one back (2 Thessalonians 2:6-7).
 - 3. The real goal of this ruler, the one thing that will drive him, is the destruction of the Jews and the tribulation saints.
- C. Vs. 25, The Anti-Christ will promote his ungodly policies and blaspheme God.
 - 1. He will be a crafty snake in the grass.
 - 2. His success will give him the big head.
 - 3. By his promotion of a false peace many will die when the wrath of God falls (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12).
 - 4. When the Anti-Christ stands up against Jesus Christ Himself, he will be crushed (2 Thessalonians 2:8).
- D. Vs. 26, Gabriel the angel of God puts his seal on the vision of Daniel. Daniel is to seal up the vision for folks in his day would not understand it. In the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, it was made clearer; and to us today, it is clearer than it has ever been before.

IX. Vs. 27, INTROSPECTION BY DANIEL CONCERNING THE VISION

- A. Daniel was sick for days as he thought on the depth of the vision. Then as any good and godly man, he got up and went back to work.
- B. Back in Daniel's day, the vision was a closed chapter of the Word. Today it is a wide open chapter to us.

Conclusion: Through the teaching of this great chapter we gain confidence in the Bible. We see all around us prophecies being fulfilled just as Daniel said they would be. Now is the time to fully trust the crucified and risen Savior.

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