

Daniel: Chapter 8

Chapter 8:1-27: Medo-Persian & Greek Empires.

Dan 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.

- 550 BC. "Belshazzar began to reign with his father as co-regent in the year 553 BC." The writer, again, is Daniel.

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Dan 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 (ay-lawm'); and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai (oo-lah'ee).

- Shushan the palace- (Neh 1:1; Est 1:2)

("The success of the ungodly is often [if not always] predicated on the overall conduct of the people of the Lord...the oppressor comes to power" because of transgressions.)

- Ulai- This River joined the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

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Dan 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.

Dan 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.

- Medo-Persian kingdom (v. 20). Higher horn denotes the supremacy of the Persian element. The Medes were more prominent until Cyrus the Great came along, thus the higher came up last.

The Persian kingdom "over-ran everything where it went, including Egypt and Asia Minor."

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Dan 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.

- he goat- The Grecian kingdom. (Palestine is viewed as center- the Persians came from the east of Palestine, the Greeks from the west.)

- touched not the ground- Alexander the Great (the "notable horn") quickly conquered the whole world.

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Dan 8:6 And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power.

Dan 8:7 And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler (bitterness) against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns; and there was

no power in the ram 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.

- break his two horns- one world power (*Medo-Persian*) conquered by the next (*Greek*).

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Dan 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.

- After conquering the world by the age of 33 (323 BC) Alexander the Great died. His empire was divided in four parts.
 1. Lysimachus got Thracia (later killed by Seleucus in 280 who gained Thracia).
 2. Cassander got Macedonia.
 3. Seleucus I Nicator got Babylon, Syria and Asia Minor.
 4. Ptolemy I Soter got Egypt and Palestine.

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Dan 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.

- little horn- Antiochus IV Epiphanes the Seleucid "*ruled the kingdom established by Seleucus I Nicator in 312 BC.*" He robbed temples in Persia, over-ran Egypt (170 BC) and fiercely persecuted the Jews in the "pleasant land" (Palestine).

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Dan 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.

- stars- in context: authorities (*people*). Read Gen 15:5; 37:9-11; Dan 12:3

Mat 24:29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars (*Jewish authorities*) shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

Rev 12:1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun (*greater authority-the Gospel*), and the moon (*lesser authority-the Law of Moses*) under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars (*patriarchs*):

Rev 12:4 And his (*the dragon/Satan's*) tail drew the third part of the stars (*angels*) of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

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Dan 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.

Dan 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.

- Prince of the host-

Jos 5:13 And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with His sword drawn in His hand: and Joshua went unto Him, and said unto Him, *Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?* 14 And He said, Nay; but **as Captain of the host** of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto Him, What saith my lord unto His servant? 15 And the **Captain of the LORD'S host** said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so. (*Emp. added*)

Antiochus blasphemed God continually. He caused the daily work in the temple to cease, desecrated the temple and persecuted the people. In December 168 BC an idol, the drunken god Dionysius, was set up in the sanctuary.

- by reason of transgression- Antiochus' success was in response to the wickedness of God's people. (See notes on v. 2)

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Dan 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?

- saint- Heb.6918-angel.

- How long will this blasphemous desecration and persecution last?

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Dan 8:14 And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.

- the sanctuary be cleansed- (Under Judas Maccabeus- Dec 25, 165 BC) i.e., "restored to it's rightful state" (RSV).

- 2300 days- a little short of seven years. The king's power falls short of completeness.

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Dan 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.

- as the appearance of a man- Gabriel was standing near to Daniel when he saw the vision.

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Dan 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 Man's voice- Deity (the Son in the Godhead) called to Gabriel instructing him to explain the vision to Daniel, just as He (Deity) spoke to Moses via the burning bush (Ex 3:2-4).

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Dan 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.

- Daniel fainted.

- the time of the end- ...*"the Lord's work in judging the ungodly and delivering His people"...* "A time appointed by God and an end of the vision"... here speaking of the end of Antiochus' persecution of the Jews; 11:27 refers to the end of the Seleucid and Ptolemy kingdoms; 12:4 refers to the conflict between the Antiochus and the Jews that would not happen during Daniel's lifetime.

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Dan 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.

Dan 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 revived Daniel.

- the last end of the indignation- outpouring of the wrath of God against sin. God will use a wicked government to punish His own wicked people. *"The righteous will be hurt in the process but it will act as a refining element for them."* (1 Pet. 1:7 ...*the trial of your faith...*)

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Dan 8:20 The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia.

- Ram's horns- Media and Persia. (530 BC)

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Dan 8:21 And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.

- rough goat- represents Greece. (rough= hairy)

- first king- Alexander the Great. Son of Phillip II and a witch woman named Olympia, he was born in 356 BC. It was this Phillip who changed the name of Amphipolis to "Philipi".

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Dan 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.

- After Alexander's death due to fever and too much drinking, the four who ruled in his place did not have the same success as did Alexander. (see notes on v. 8) The Seleucids lasted until 64 BC, the Ptolemies until 31 BC.

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Dan 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.

- the latter time- of the Seleucid kingdom (v. 9).

- transgressors- God's own wicked people (*v. 19*).

- king of fierce countenance- Antiochus IV

- understanding dark sentences- "*his ability to be devious and crafty.*" Antiochus IV knew how deep evil could be.

Rev 2:24 But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known **the depths of Satan**, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. (*Emp. added*)

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Dan 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.

Dan 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.

- "*In one sustained raid he caused 40,000 to be slain by the hand of one whom he sent in peace*"... He was "*the most vindictive religious persecutor of pre-Christian times.*"

- craft to prosper- he was so successful at conniving.

- stand up against the Prince of princes- he was blasphemous but was defeated...

- without hand- by Divine intervention. (2:34, 45)

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Dan 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.

- Received in 550 BC, the vision was completed in 164 BC (*v. 14*), almost 400 years later. (Compare Rev 1:1, 3; 22:6, **10**)

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Dan 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.

- fainted, and was sick- "*Evil times were ahead for his people.*" Even with this troubling vision, Daniel rose up and did the king's business. He understood Jeremiah's prophesy of 70 years (9:2) but not this vision. He was not to know the interpretation. We understand it because it is history to us.

1Pe 1:12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.