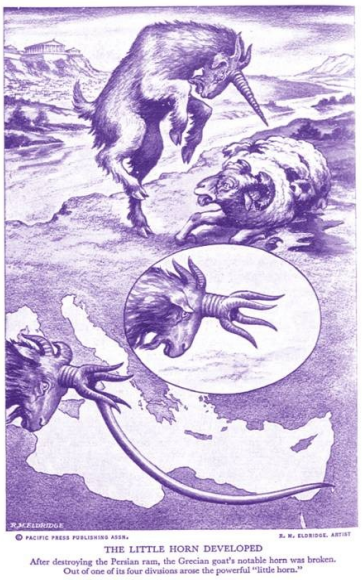
"LEARN FROM THE PAST TO PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE"

(Daniel's Vision of the Ram, Goat, and Little Horn)
Daniel 8:1-27
6-6-2021



INTRODUCTION:

I. The <u>SUBSTANCE</u> of Daniel's Vision (v. 1-14)
(Prophecy Fulfilled in the Past)

A. The Conquest of the <u>Ram</u> (Medo-Persia) (v. 1-4, 20)

B. The Conquest of the <u>Goat</u> (Greece) (v. 5-14, 21a-23)

1. The Great Horn of Greece (Alexander the Great) (v. 4, 8, 21b)
2. The Four Horns of Greece (Greece's four generals) (v. 8, 22)
3. The Little Horn of Greece (Antiochus Epiphanes) (v. 9-14, 23)
   a. He invades Israel (v. 9)
   b. He torments Israel (v. 10)
   c. He exalts himself against God (v. 11)
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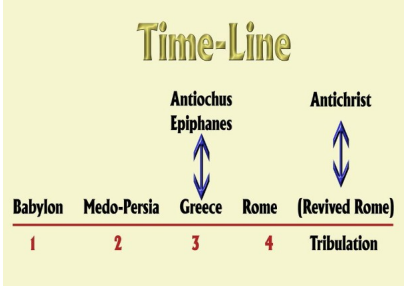
II. The <u>SIGNIFICANCE</u> of Daniel's Vision (v. 15-27)
(Prophecy Foreshadowing the Future)

A. Daniel's Vision has <u>End-Time</u> Significance (v. 15-22)

B. Daniel's Vision of <u>Antiochus</u> is a Foreshadowing of <u>Antichrist</u> (v. 23-25)

Characteristics of a man who does not fear God - Antiochus Epiphanes, like the future Antichrist, is characterized by:

1. <u>Fearless contempt</u> for that which is <u>holy</u> (v. 11-14)
2. <u>Satanic power</u> to accomplish wickedness (v. 24)
3. <u>Bitter opposition</u> to God's people (v. 10, 24b)
4. <u>Deceitful trickery</u> to lead astray those who don't know the Bible
   a. Magical <u>signs and wonders</u> (v. 23b, 25a)
   b. False promise of <u>peace</u> (v. 25b)
5. <u>Blasphemous pride</u> against God (v. 11a, 25c)
6. <u>Personal destruction</u> by God (v. 25d)
   (Pay day some day!)

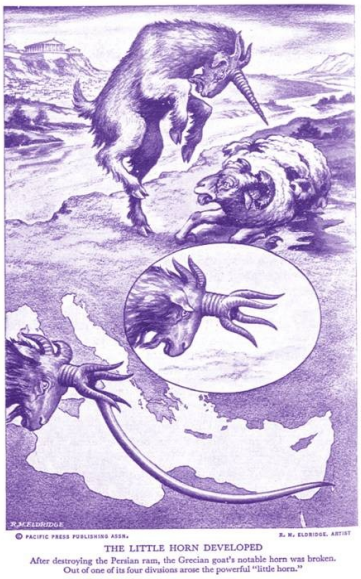


CONCLUSION: V. 26-27
**A Message to Israel:*

Learn from the past to prepare for your future!

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   a. He _____ Israel (v. 9)
   b. He _____ Israel (v. 10)
   c. He _____against God (v. 11)
   d. He _____ the Temple (v. 11-14)

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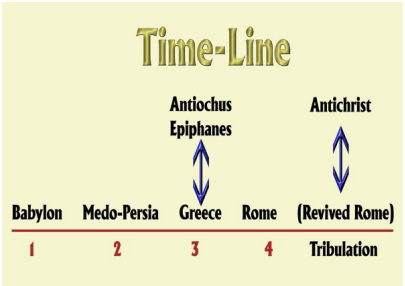
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CONCLUSION: V. 26-27
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INTRODUCTION:

Review the visions of Daniel 2 & 7.

I. The SUBSTANCE of Daniel's Vision (v. 1-14)

(Prophecy Fulfilled in the Past)

A. The Conquest of the Ram (Medo-Persia) (v. 1-4, 20)

V. 1

"A vision appeared" - Daniel could visibly see a panoramic motion picture produced by God in the "studios" of Heaven.

Daniel received this vision in 551 B.C. ("the third year of Belshazzar" - 8:1).

"After that which appeared unto me at the first" - Daniel's first vision is described in chapter 7 and unveiled the four major world powers (along with the escatological "10-horned" confederacy of the future revived Roman Empire).

Now, in chapter 8, God gives Daniel details about two of the kingdoms that would follow Babylon. Namely, Medo-Persia and Greece.

One characteristic of good journalism is to give a broad overview of an event and then go back and fill in the details. This is what God does in chapter 8.

V. 2

"I was at Shushan . . . the significance of this location is that in Daniel's vision, he is transported from Babylon to the place that was the capital of Medo-Persia. It is from this perspective that God gives Daniel revelation about the impending future of the Medo-Persian Empire.

V. 3

"Ram" = symbolizing the kingdom that would have its capital at Shushan, namely Medo-Persia (cp. v. 20)

"Ammianus Marcellinus, a fourth century historian, states that the Persian ruler bore the head of a ram as he stood at the head of his army" (Wood, p. 208).

Keil quotes ancient literature as representing the Persian kingdom "under the form of a ram with clean feet and sharp pointed horns" (Keil, p. 290).

"Two horns" - One symbolizing the Medes and the other the Persians.

"One was higher than the other" - Corresponds to the "Bear" raised up on one side - 7:5).

"The higher came up last" - "Though Persia was the younger kingdom, under Cyrus it became the dominant one in 550" (Ryrie, KJV Study Bible, p. 1234).

V. 4

"West...north...south" - the conquest in three territories corresponds with the three ribs int he mouth of the bear (7:5).

The Ram moves from the east to the west, north to south. Medo-Persia was east of Babylon and was an unconquerable kingdom, until Greece arose to world power.

B. The Conquest of the Goat (Greece) (v. 5-14, 21a-23)

V. 5

"Goat" - symbolizing the Kingdom of Greece (cp. v. 21).

"On the face of the whole earth" - describes the vastness of Greece's conquest (Alexander the Great's goal was to conquer and Hellenize the whole world).

"And touched not the ground" - Describes the swiftness of Greece's conquest (Alexander's army just glided from victory to victory without delay).

1. The Great Horn of Greece (Alexander the Great) (v. 5, 8, 21b)

"A notable horn" - describing Alexander the Great, the sole dictator and military commander of the Grecian Empire.

Alexander conquered Medo-Persia in merely three battles:

1) at the Granicus River - 334 B.C.

2) at Issus - 332 B.C.

3) at the battle of Guagemalla - 331 B.C.

V. 7

"He was moved with choler against him" - Greece charged Medo-Persia head on with vehement anger, in a furious rage.

2. The Four Horns of Greece (Greece's four generals) (v. 8, 22)

V. 8

At the pinnacle of Alexander's conquests, Greece was a mighty empire under his singular leadership [Hence, the "great horn" (singular)]. However, after the death of Alexander, his kingdom was divided among his four generals (hence, the "four notable horns").

--Cassander - Macedonia
--Lysimachus - Thrace, Asia Minor
--Seleucus - Syria
--Ptolemy - Egypt

The four horns parallel the four heads on the leopard of 7:6).

3. The Little Horn of Greece (Antiochus Epiphanes) (v. 9-14, 23)

This "little horn" which comes up out of one of the four horns of the Greek Empire is not the same as the "little horn" which came up in the midst of the 10 horns of the revived Roman Empire described in 7:8.

The little horn of Daniel 7:8 is obviously distinct from that of Daniel 8:9 –

Daniel 7	Daniel 8
Associated with 10 horns	Associated with four horns
Arises as a separate horn out of head of the beast	Arises out of one of the four horns
Associated with the fourth beast – Rome	Associated with the third beast - Greece
Continues over Israel for 3 1/2 years	Continues over Israel for 2,300 days
Destroyed and replaced by the eternal kingdomto replace him	Broken off - nothing said of the kingdom

This "little horn" is not the Antichrist, but was an historical figure (named Antiochus Epiphanes) who was much like the Antichrist will be.

Antiochus reigned from 175-164 B.C.

Antiochus was the 8th ruler of the Seleucis Dynasty, which ruled over Syria (north of Palestine) after Alexander's death.

a. He invades Israel (v. 9)

The "pleasant land" = Israel (the land of Palestine is called the pleasant land - Jer. 3:19).

b. He torments Israel (v. 10)

"And it waxed great" - the little horn (v. 9) - Antiochus

"And indeed it so came to pass that our nation suffered these things under Antiochus Epiphanes, according to Daniel's vision, and what he wrote many years before they came to pass"

(Josephus, Ant. X, 11, 7).

"The host of heaven" - God's people, the Jews, who were horribly persecuted by Antiochus (Ryrie note).

"The stars" - Again a reference to God's people - the 12 tribes of israel who are compared to "stars" (Gen. 37:9-10; Rev. 12:1; Cp. Gen. 15:5, 22:17; Jer. 33:22).

c. He exalts himself against God (v. 11)

"The prince of the host" = the Lord Himself. Antiochus, like the future Antichrist, was lifted up in pride against God.

d. He desecrates the Temple (v. 11-14)

V. 12

"The daily sacrifice" - Antiochus desecrated (polluted) the Jewish Temple when he in 168 B.C. offered a pig on the altar made to Zeus in God's Temple, and also erected an image of Zeus in the Temple.

Principle: Opposition to the truth will sometimes prosper.

(Even today, many of those who most vehemently oppose God's truth and ways seem to prosper. But consider their end! It will not be successful forever (SEE Psalm 73:1-19).

"2,300 days" - Some view the word "days" (lit. Hebrew "evenings and mornings") as referring to 2,300 evening and morning sacrifices, which would be 1,150 days, a period of three years, 2 months, 10 days - From 168 B.C. to 165 B.C. (Lange, Hoekema).

V. 14

A better view is to view it as literal days - Slightly over six years - "The period from 171 B.C. (when peaceful relations between Antiochus and the Jews came to an end) to Dec. 25, 165 B.C. (when Judas Maccabeus restored the Temple for its proper worship). (Ryrie note)

The Jews regained the Temple and cleansed it of the idolatry on Dec. 25, 165 B.C.

*this event is commemorated by the Jewish celebration of

Hanukkah each year near Christmas time.

II. The SIGNIFICANCE of Daniel's Vision (v. 15-27)

(Prophecy Foreshadowing the Future)

A. Daniel's Vision has End-Time Significance (v. 15-22)

V. 16

Gabriel - God's messenger angel who brought several important messages to the Jewish people (cp. 9:21; Lk. 1:19, 26).

V. 17

The reference to the "time of the end" (cp. v. 19) is evidently describing the end of Grecian tyrannical rule over the Jews, which is a pre-figuring (a foreshadowing, a type) of the end of Roman rule over the Jews.

Also, it has prophetic significance by paralleling the Greek Ruler - Antiochus with the future world ruler Antichrist.

V. 19

"The indignation" - God was righteously indignant (angry) toward Israel because of her sin and disobedience, and therefore allowed the Jewish nation to undergo severe opposition by Antiochus. The future time of "Jacob's Trouble" will be for the same reason.

V. 20-21

God's interpretation:

1) Ram with two horns = Media and Persia

2) Rough goat with one horn = Greece under the king Alexander

*What an amazing prophecy, where God is so specific. Many modern critics of the book of Daniel attempt to date the Book after the Greek Empire, since they cannot accept such accurate predictive prophecy).

V. 22

"Broken" - Alexander died in 323 B.C. (at the young age of 31-32).

B. Daniel's Vision of Antiochus is a Foreshadowing of Antichrist (v. 23-25)

"The latter time of their kingdom" - toward the end of the kingdom of the four horns, Antiochus Epiphanes came to power.

V. 23

Just as transgressors abounded prior to the coming of Antiochus, so transgressors will abound prior to the coming of Antichrist (II Th. 2:7-12; I Tim. 4:1; II Tim. 3:1-5).

Antiochus in many ways is a type or a prefiguring of the future Antichrist.

Proofs:

1) Both are depicted as little horns"
(Antichrist - 7:8; Antiochus - 8:8)

2) Both are depicted as "great" (powerful) leaders
(Antichrist - 7:8, 11, 25; Antiochus - 8:9)

3) Both seek a throne at Jerusalem
(Antichrist - II Th. 2:4; Antiochus - 8:9 - "the pleasant land")

4) Both oppose Israel
(Antichrist - 7:21, 25; Antiochus - 8:10, 24)

5) Both desecrate the Jewish Temple
(Antichrist - 9:27; Mt. 24:15; Antiochus - 8:11, 12)

6) Both are characterized by a fierce (fearsome) countenance
(Antichrist - 7:20; Antiochus - 8:23)

7) Both get their power from another
(Antichrist - 13:2, 4; Antiochus - 8:24)

8) Both "prosper" for a while
(Antichrist - 7:24-25; Antiochus - 8:24)

9) Both are effective at practicing deception
(Antichrist - II Th. 2:9-10; Antiochus - 8:25)

10) Both are lifted up in pride against God
(Antichrist - 7:11, 25; Antiochus - 8:25)

11) Both are destroyed without the hand of man involved

(Antichrist - 7:11; II Th. 2:8; Rev. 19:20; Antiochus - 8:25)

Characteristics of a man who does not fear God - Antiochus Epiphanes, like the future Antichrist, is characterized by:

1. Fearless contempt for that which is holy (v. 11-14)

V. 11

The abominable desecration by Antiochus is described in I Maccabees 1:20-24; 41-50.

The Tribulation Temple will be desecrated and trampled on by the wicked Antichrist and by the anti-semitic Gentiles for 3 1/2 years at the end of the Tribulation (Dan. 9;27; Mt. 24:15; Rev. 11:2).

2. Satanic power to accomplish wickedness (v. 24)

Just as Antiochus derived his power from Satan, so Antichrist will be empowered by the Devil (Rev. 13:4).

3. Bitter opposition to God's people (v. 10, 24b)

V. 24

Ancient secular historical accounts of the bitter persecution of Israel by Antiochus -

I Maccabees 1:29-32; 1:52-61

II Maccabees 6:18-31; 7:1-42

Josephus, Ant. X, 11, 7

IV Maccabees

4. Deceitful trickery to lead astray those who don't know the Bible

   a. Magical signs and wonders (v. 23b, 25a)
   b. False promise of peace (v. 25b)

5. Blasphemous pride against God (v. 11a, 25c)

V. 25c

Epiphanes means illustrious - This man sought to attract attention and admiration to himself. Extremely proud (Wood, p. 212).

*6. Personal destruction by God (v. 25d)
(Pay day some day!)

CONCLUSION: V. 26-27

V. 26

"Shut thou up the vision" - Daniel is told to seal up this prophecy; protect these words because they would surely be fulfilled.

God's Word will be fulfilled! Every jot and tittle!

Mt. 5:18 - "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

Lk. 16:17 - "And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail."

Mt. 24:35 - "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Cp. Mk. 13:31, Lk. 21:33

V. 27

"But none understood it" - the vision was beyond anyone's ability to comprehend it at the time it was given. More revelation was needed (Ex: Daniel 9-12; the book of Revelation).

Question: why did God reveal much of prophecy with symbolic language (Ex: animals, horns, etc.)?

Answer: To hide prophetic truth from those who don't want to know it, and to reveal it to those who need to know it and are diligent enough to study it out.

Today, more than ever, we must be diligent to study God's Word!

***A Message to Israel:**

Learn from the past to prepare for your future!

The saying posted at Jonestown (regarding the Guyana cult suicide) said:

"Those who don't learn from history are condemned to repeat it."

So it will be with the Jewish people who will believe the lie of peace with Antichrist, like they did with Antiochus (v. 25).

They will also have their temple desecrated and be severely persecuted themselves by the Antichrist, like they were by Antiochus.

How important it is to learn from the past! And to not make the same mistake twice.