

SUCCESSFUL KING DOES WHAT HE PLEASES

Daniel 8

Have you ever watched someone you love go through a time of affliction?

Even when we know they brought it on themselves, it hurts to watch.

We want to jump in and rescue them!

Dan.'s dilemma—His people are going through affliction—provoked by rebellion, but still hurts to see them suffer.

In Dan 8, he continues learning about God's plan & scary events God's people will face as a result of their sin.

After 6 historical examples demonstrate God's control over political events, even under pagan govts,

Dan presents *God's program for future*.

God's Prophetic Program for Gentile Nations 7-8

OVERVIEW of Times of Gentiles: Vision of 4 Beasts 7

Rule by pagan nations

Babylon => Media-Persia => Greece => Rome

Rome => 10 nation alliance arises out of remnant

Alliance=>gives birth to 1 strong leader (displaces 3)

This one oppresses God's people for 3½ years & defeats them.

Ancient of Days judges pagan nations & destroys beast.

Kingdom is handed over to Son of Man & His people forever.

Pagan nations rage;

kingdoms come & go;

God's saints possess an eternal kingdom!

Detailed View of Immediate Future:

Vision of Ram & Goat 8

3rd yr of Belshazzar –2 yr after ch. 7–

11 yr before fall of Babylon

THE VISION 1-14 Introduction 1-2

“In 3rd yr of reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me, Daniel, after that which appeared to me at 1st. ²I saw in the vision; when I saw, I was in Susa the capital in the province of Elam. I saw in the vision, & I was at the Ulai canal.”

Description of Ram 3-4 *“I raised my eyes & saw, & behold, a ram standing on the bank of the canal. It had 2 horns, & both horns were high, but one was higher than the other, & the higher one came up last. ⁴I saw the ram charging westward & northward & southward. No beast could stand before him, & there was no one who could rescue from his power. He did as he pleased & became great.”*

Daniel sees ram with 2 *uneven horns*

1 always greater, but 1st is eventually surpassed by other.

Though allies, they're never equal;

1 is always superior.

Compare this ram and lop-sided bear (7)

Dan.'s interpretation: **20** *“As for the ram that you saw with 2 horns, these are the kings of Media & Persia.”*

It extends power toward west, north & south

**Ram's strong; none can oppose,
nor free self from him.**

**GREAT PAGAN KING
DOES WHATEVER HE PLEASES!
NO ONE CAN STOP HIM!**

Defeat of Ram 5-8

Description of Victorious Goat:

Suddenly another participant appears:

Goat confronts the ram.

He passes ***rapidly***—feet never touch ground! 5 “A male goat came from the west across the face of the whole earth, without touching the ground. The goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes.”

(Cp. winged leopard (7))

Conspicuous horn on forehead—prominent king Attacks Ram furiously; destroys it 6-8 *He came to the ram with the 2 horns, which I’d seen standing on the bank of the canal; he ran at him in his powerful wrath. ⁷I saw him come close to the ram; he was enraged against him, struck the ram & broke his 2 horns. The ram had no power to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground & trampled on him. There was no one who could rescue the ram from his power. ⁸The goat became exceedingly great, but when he was strong, the great horn was broken, & instead of it there came up 4 conspicuous horns toward the 4 winds of heaven.”*

Greece defeats Media-Persia => prominent king = Alexander

He eliminates competition,
new power *magnifies self!*

Before *he* can do *what he pleases*, the horn is broken.

4 come out in it's place—stretch out in all 4 directions.

Before you accuse me of fertile imagination, check out **21-22**

Competition lasts 20 yrs, A.D. 323-301.

4 generals resolve conflict,
dividing empire in 4 parts.

Specific fulfillment; critics can't believe God reveals it in advance.

In spite of writer's claim, they deny Daniel wrote it. 27

If God *can* reveal events centuries before, no basis to deny Dan

Description of little horn 8:9-14

9 *Out of one of them came a little horn, which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, & toward the glorious land."*

Little horn comes from 1 of 4; greater than others.

Extends empire toward South = Egypt

toward East = India (Incl. Persia
(Iran/Iraq))

& toward the "Beautiful Land" = Israel

Antiochus wants to overthrow Ptolemy; control south.

Israel= buffer zone oppressed by both when attack each other.

10 *It grew great, even to the host of heaven. Some of the host & some of the stars it threw down to the ground & trampled on them.*

Attacks “host of heaven,” fig. ref. to God’s people

“Stars” he threw down probably points to prominent leaders.

11-12 ¹¹*It became great, even as great as the Prince of the host. The regular burnt offering was taken away from him, & the place of his sanctuary was overthrown.* ¹²*A host will be given over to it together with the regular burnt offering because of transgression; it will throw truth to the ground; it will act & prosper.”*

Magnifies self; takes over Jerusalem & God’s people

Opposes God

Stops sacrifices & desecrates altar in the temple

Successful “because of [their] rebellion” (= breaking law)

He doesn’t defeat God.

Because of oppression, **“truth is thrown to the ground”**

God’s people turn their back on the truth!

He doesn’t let them remain faithful to God’s commands.

He’s presented as king who does whatever he pleases

No one can stop him; his empire prospers

1 Macc. affirms these prophecies are carried out to the letter!

13-14 *"I heard a holy 1 speaking; another holy 1 said to 1 who spoke, "For how long is the vision concerning the regular burnt offering, the transgression that makes desolate, & the giving over of the sanctuary & host to be trampled underfoot?"* ¹⁴*He said to me, "For 2,300 evenings & mornings. Then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state."*

"How long will this last?" Answer: 2,300 days (= 6.3888 yr)

= attack on Jerusalem => until purification of temple.

What does 6¹/₃ years view?

Antiochus IV, Epiphanes 175-163

Antiochus begins reign with good relations with most people.

After failed attempts to defeat Ptolemy, he decides to consolidate territories, including Holy Land.

Most effective way to consolidate: cultural transformation.

Tries to convince them to convert to *his* culture & religion. For 3½ years, distracting degeneration of High Priesthood. Straw that "broke camel's back:" Antiochus goes after Ptolemy.

Rumor: "he's been killed." *Israel threw a party!*

He isn't happy!—attacks city; 40,000 killed in 3 days.

Until then Antiochus and Jews were tolerably friendly.

±170/69 Events provoke rebellion; Antiochus moves in

It takes a bit more than 3 yrs to defeat them.

Climax: **destruction of temple, 25th of Kislev, 167.**
 Maccabees defeat Antiochus; restore temple, exactly 3 yr later.

=> **Destruction of the temple—25 Kislev, 167**

=> **Restoration of the temple—25 Kislev 164**

Years of persecution + struggle to restore temple = just over 6 yr

INTERPRETATION OF VISION 8:15-27

Introduction 15-19 *"When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it. Behold, there stood before me 1 having appearance of a man. ¹⁶I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai; it called, "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision." ¹⁷So he came near where I stood. When he came, I was frightened & fell on my face. But he said to me, "Understand, O son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end." ¹⁸When he'd spoken to me, I fell into a deep sleep with my face to the ground. But he touched me & made me stand up. ¹⁹He said, "Behold, I will make known to you what shall be at the latter end of the indignation, for it refers to the appointed time of the end."*

Daniel is weak, but wants to understand

God sends messenger to explain and strengthen him

Revelation relates to end time => period of wrath
 (=> leads up to Christ)

"Time of wrath:"

God judges Israel because of rebellion.

These events finish period of judgment

Identity of Ram = Media-Persia 20 *"As for the ram you saw with 2 horns, these are the kings of Media & Persia."*

Medo-Persians didn't yet have prominent role; about to get strong.

No one would be able to stand up to them.

Identity of Goat = Greece 21-22 *"The goat is the king of Greece. The great horn between his eyes is the 1st king. ²²As for the horn that was broken, in place of which 4 others arose, 4 kingdoms shall arise from his nation, but not with his power."*

Greek Empire becomes more powerful.

It quickly conquers Medo-Persians.

Alexander's 4 generals divide empire and form mini-empires.

None strong as Alexander

Identity of Little Horn 23-26 *"At latter end of their kingdom, when the transgressors have reached their limit, a king of bold face, one who understands riddles, shall arise. ²⁴His power shall be great—but not by his own power; he shall cause fearful destruction & shall succeed in what he does, destroy mighty men & the people who are the saints. ²⁵By his cunning he shall make deceit prosper under his hand, & in his own mind he shall become great. Without warning he shall destroy many. He shall even rise up against the Prince of princes, & he shall be broken—but by no human hand. ²⁶The vision of evenings & mornings that has been told is true, but seal up the vision, for it refers to many days from now."*

Previous vision, deals with times of Gentiles,
focuses on 4th beast –significant to entire period.

Immediate future focuses on little horn from 3rd beast, Greece

"Little horns" similar—not same,

1 from Greece; other, Rome.

4th beast won't enter picture for a long time.

4 MAJOR ASPECTS of his reign:

1. Power to defeat others, including God's people

2. His attitude

Great pagan king does whatever he pleases!

No one can stop him!

Attacks God's people without fear that God will touch him.

3. His deceit and cleverness

Attempts to change values so they no longer depend on Yahweh, but on *his* gods and culture.

4. His end

Great king destroyed,
but not by human hands.

Usually refers to direct divine intervention.

***God controls details of history
& raging of nations
to accomplish His purposes!***

Appears wicked king prospers,

he gets his way;

no one can stop him;

BUT ultimately, in the end, he loses!

Observation of godly people throughout Scripture:

Wicked appear to prosper –God ultimately wins;

Ultimately wicked are defeated;

the faithful triumph!

God's people have to be reminded, **GOD WINS!**

No matter how grim things look,
how powerful evil one seems.

GOD WINS; WE WIN WITH HIM!

Second lesson: Not only does God win;

He wins without human intervention!

God's opponent is destroyed,

BUT NOT BY HUMAN POWER!

God can deal with those who oppose His people and His laws.

We don't have to rescue Him!

Little horn has to be direct reference to Antiochus IV, Epiphanes.

Descends from Seleucus and does everything vision says he will.

Certain aspects of vision don't conform to Antiochus

Antiochus is TYPE of "little horn" in chapter 7.

Antiochus' identification with Antichrist is as a *TYPE*, NOT real thing!

25 beyond experience of Antiochus to one he represents, Antichrist

Scripture with David; goes beyond his experience to Jesus. Some elements aren't fulfilled by Antiochus.

Same *kinds of things* happen,
but not to *same extent*

E.g., **Opposition** to "Prince of princes"—no king in Israel.

Opposes royal family, but doesn't take on king; there isn't one.

Any king of Israel = most significant king; king over God's people,

The "Prince of princes"—yet to come;
face opposition from *Antichrist*.

Fulfillment is more exact for Antichrist, though true of Antiochus.

Conclusion 26-27 *"Vision of evenings & mornings that has been told is true, but seal up the vision; it refers to many days from now." ²⁷I, Dan, was overcome & lay sick for some days. Then I rose & went about the king's business, but I was appalled by the vision & didn't understand it."*

Though vision deals with things coming soon—won't happen tomorrow.

RAM isn't in power yet, much less the GOAT!

(12 years to Persian Empire + 216 years to Alexander's take over

+ 148 until Antiochus comes to power)

= 376 years

Even so, fulfillment is sure.

He can count on it.

God always takes longer than we think He should!

Dan assured God will solve problem... *after 380 years!*

Daniel's reaction 27—exhausted, sick.

He knows this is God's plan,

God is in control & faithful will ultimately triumph, yet it's painful to watch it happen!

Can you identify with Daniel's feeling?

Have you been in his shoes?

Daniel needs another dose of Dan. 1-6

God protected people facing *past* pagans;

He can handle Antiochus.

God *still* controls history,

even dealing with strongest pagan kings.

Faithful will triumph, no matter WHO opposes.

Though he knows all this in his head, his heart is upset.

Do we sometimes respond that way?

In our heads we know truth about God's control & protection.

But when we see someone we love suffering, perhaps as a result of bad choices, we want to help them avoid pain & rescue them.

Our desire to rescue them provokes frustration, fear, depression.

We end up confused, tired, sometimes even ill.

Is God taking too long to resolve issue you're struggling with?

Only escape is to rest in peace & security God gives.

God knows what He's doing.

We can trust Him.