

## 15Daniel 8

# The Vision of the Ram and Goat

This second vision given to Daniel focuses on and expands his first vision of the four beast. The focus is on the 2nd and 3rd beasts.

### The setting

**Vs. 1** - In the third year of King Belshazzar's reign, I, Daniel, had a vision, after the one that had already appeared to me.

- The timing of the vision: \_\_\_\_\_ after the vision of chapter 7.
- The language of the vision: switches back to \_\_\_\_\_ from the Aramaic.
  - ➔ Marks a change in focus: this vision one the two following have the nation Israel as it's focus.
- The location of the vision: Daniel is transported to "citadel of \_\_\_\_\_".
  - ➔ This area was most likely under Persian, not Babylonian, control.
  - ➔ Susa would become the Persian Empire capital.

### Some general observations

Observation #1: Daniel's \_\_\_\_\_

*vs 1 - In the third year of King Belshazzar's reign, I, Daniel, had a vision, after the one that had already appeared to me.*

Observation #2: Angelic \_\_\_\_\_

vs 15-19 - *While I, Daniel, was watching the vision and trying to understand it, there before me stood one who looked like a man. 16 And I heard a man's voice from the Ulai calling, "Gabriel, tell this man the meaning of the vision." 17 As he came near the place where I was standing, I was terrified and fell prostrate. "Son of man," he said to me, "understand that the vision concerns the time of the end." 18 While he was speaking to me, I was in a deep sleep, with my face to the ground. Then he touched me and raised me to my feet.*

Observation #3: Certain \_\_\_\_\_

vs. 19 *He said: "I am going to tell you what will happen later in the time of wrath, because the vision concerns the appointed time of the end.*

### **The vision of the Ram and Goat**

There are 3 acts to the drama in Daniel's vision.

#### **Act One: A ram with two long horns appears.**

The drama described. (vs. 3-4)

*I looked up, and there before me was a ram with two horns, standing beside the canal, and the horns were long. One of the horns was longer than the other but grew up later. I watched the ram as it charged toward the west and the north and the south. No animal could stand against it, and none could rescue from its power. It did as it pleased and became great.*

The vision interpreted.

vs. 20 - *"The two-horned ram that you saw represents the kings of Media and Persia."*

- The ram represents the \_\_\_\_\_ empire. (539-331 BCE)
  - ➔ The Persians conquered the Medes under Cyrus in 550 BCE and formed an alliance with them, practicing a "benign dominance".
  - ➔ The Persians, being the dominant people, were the "longer horn".
  
- The Medo-Persian empire greatly \_\_\_\_\_ their territory.
  - ➔ They conquered Babylon in 539 BC (to the west), Lydia (modern Turkey) in 546BC (to the north), and Egypt in 525 BC (to the south).

### **Act Two: A goat with one prominent horn appears.**

The drama described. (vs. 5-8)

*As I was thinking about this, suddenly a goat with a prominent horn between its eyes came from the west, crossing the whole earth without touching the ground. It came toward the two-horned ram I had seen standing beside the canal and charged at it in great rage. I saw it attack the ram furiously, striking the ram and shattering its two horns. The ram was powerless to stand against it; the goat knocked it to the ground and trampled on it, and none could rescue the ram from its power. The goat became very great, but at the height of its power the large horn was broken off, and in its place four prominent horns grew up toward the four winds of heaven.*

The vision interpreted.

vs. 21-22 - *The shaggy goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between its eyes is the first king. The four horns that replaced the one that was broken off represent four kingdoms that will emerge from his nation but will not have the same power.*

- The goat represents the \_\_\_\_\_ Empire.
  
- The horn represents \_\_\_\_\_, who assumed control of the Greek states in 335 BC.
  - ➔ \_\_\_\_\_ - By 331 BC he had broken the Medo-Persian empire. By 323 BC he had conquered territory from Egypt to India - in one non-stop military campaign!
  
  - ➔ \_\_\_\_\_ - Alexander attacked the Medo-Persian empire with particular fury in payback for their attacks on the Greek city-states.
    - The 1st invasion was led by Darius I in 490BC. The Persians attacked near Marathon, but the smaller Greek army repelled this invasion.
  
    - The 2nd invasion was led by Xerxes I son of Darius in 480BC. The most famous battle was in Thermopylae. The Greeks again won.
  
  - ➔ HORN BROKEN OFF refers to the \_\_\_\_\_ of Alexander. Facing mutiny from his troops, he turned for home, but fell ill and died in Babylon in 323BC.

- THE FOUR HORNS represent the 4 \_\_\_\_\_ who replaced Alexander in ruling the Greek Empire.
  - ➔ Alexander died without a recognized heir.
  - ➔ Eventually 4 military associates of Alexander took control of sections of the Greek Empire. They emerged from a group known as the Diadochi, or “the successors” of Alexander, who fought for control.
    - Seleucus - a general in Alexander’s army. Controlled Syria eastward through Mesopotamia and Persia.
    - Ptolemy - a general in Alexander’s army. Controlled Egypt, Cyrene, and often parts of the Levant.
    - Lysimachus - a officer in Alexander’s army, prominent in Asian campaigns. Ruled Thrace and Western Asia Minor.
    - Cassander - a highly-regarded political figure, the son of Antipater, the regent of Macedon under Alexander. Controlled Macedon, Greece, and parts of Thessaly.

**Act Three: Another horn grows from the goat.**

In this third act things get more complicated to understand. This is for a several of reasons.

- The angel doesn’t \_\_\_\_\_ some parts of Daniel’s vision.
- The angel adds \_\_\_\_\_ to Daniel’s vision.

- This is another \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_ vision (one thing in the near serving as a type of another thing in the distant future).

The angelic interpreter.

15 When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it. And behold, there stood before me one having the appearance of a man.  
 16 And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, and it called, "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision." 17 So he came near where I stood. And when he came, I was frightened and fell on my face. But he said to me, "Understand, O son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end." 18 And when he had spoken to me, I fell into a deep sleep with my face to the ground. But he touched me and made me stand up. 19 He 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.

Observation #1: Daniel doesn't understand the \_\_\_\_\_ vision.

Observation #2: The angel Gabriel is instructed to help him \_\_\_\_\_ the vision.

Observation #3: The angel states the vision if for the \_\_\_\_\_.

The drama described.

**vs.9-14** - Out of one of them came another horn, which started small but grew in power to the south and to the east and toward the Beautiful Land. It grew until it reached the host of the heavens, and it threw some of the starry host down to the earth and trampled on them. It set itself up to be as great as the commander of the army of the Lord; it took away the daily sacrifice from the Lord, and his sanctuary was thrown down. Because of rebellion, the Lord's people and the daily sacrifice were given over to it.

*It prospered in everything it did, and truth was thrown to the ground. Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to him, "How long will it take for the vision to be fulfilled—the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, the rebellion that causes desolation, the surrender of the sanctuary and the trampling underfoot of the Lord's people?" He said to me, "It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated."*

### The vision interpreted

**Vs. 22-26** *"In the latter part of their reign, when rebels have become completely wicked, a fierce-looking king, a master of intrigue, will arise. He will become very strong, but not by his own power. He will cause astounding devastation and will succeed in whatever he does. He will destroy those who are mighty, the holy people. He will cause deceit to prosper, and he will consider himself superior. When they feel secure, he will destroy many and take his stand against the Prince of princes. Yet he will be destroyed, but not by human power. The vision of the evenings and mornings that has been given you is true, but seal up the vision, for it concerns the distant future." Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to him, "How long will it take for the vision to be fulfilled—the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, the rebellion that causes desolation, the surrender of the sanctuary and the trampling underfoot of the Lord's people?" He said to me, "It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated."*

### **The near-term fulfillment: Antiochus IV Epiphanes**

The "little horn that grew great" was Antiochus IV, the 8th king of the Seleucid Empire (the Syrian part of the Greek Empire under Seleucus).

- HIS SURPRISING RISE

- ➔ He came to power \_\_\_\_\_ after the 4 kingdoms of Greece were established.

→ He came to power from \_\_\_\_\_.

- HIS CORRUPT CHARACTER

→ He seized power through political maneuvering, \_\_\_\_\_, and flattering allies.

→ He was energized by \_\_\_\_\_ to do great evil against God's people.

→ He wanted people's \_\_\_\_\_, taking the title "Epiphanes", or "god manifest".

- HIS THIRST FOR POWER

→ He sought to \_\_\_\_\_ his kingdom, invading Egypt and defeating Ptolemaic forces. He also turned eastward to regain control of the Parthian region (Iran area).

→ He sought to \_\_\_\_\_ by forcing the Hellenization of his territory, founding or re-founding Greek cities and cultural practices.

- HIS PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS.

→ He sought to \_\_\_\_\_ the Jewish religion practices.

- Sold the high priesthood to people under the promise that Greek reforms and practices would be instituted in the Jerusalem.

- ▶ He soon after outlawed core Jewish practices, including temple sacrifices, and started destroying copies of the Torah.
  - ▶ He dedicated the Jewish Temple to Zeus and offered a pig on the sacred altar, desecrating it.
- ➔ He sought to \_\_\_\_\_ the Jewish people.
- ▶ He attacked Jerusalem upon hearing of turmoil in the city and interpreting it as a revolt.
  - ▶ He killed priest, leaders, and faithful Jews, enslaved others, and plundered the city and temple.
- ➔ He opposes the true God

- HIS EVENTUAL DEFEAT AND DESTRUCTION

- ➔ Judas Maccabaeus led a \_\_\_\_\_ against Antiochus and the Greek Empire.
- ▶ In 167BC, Mattathias Maccabaeus, a priest, sparked a revolt by refusing to comply to laws requiring the worship of Greek gods. Upon his death in 166BC his son, Judas, took over the movement.

- ▶ For several years Judas engaged in successful guerrilla warfare against the Greek armies.
  
- ▶ In 164 Judas liberated Jerusalem and cleansed the temple to reinstitute Jewish sacrifices.
  
- ▶ From the laws forbidding sacrifices to the restoration of sacrifices was just over 3 years.
  
- Antiochus IV Epiphanes died in \_\_\_\_\_ from a combination of an infectious disease and emotional distress over news from Jerusalem.

### **The far-term fulfillment: The Anti-Christ**

- HIS SURPRISING RISE

- ➔ He will ascend from \_\_\_\_\_ to rule the world.
  
- ➔ He makes a comeback from a \_\_\_\_\_.

- HIS CORRUPT CHARACTER

- ➔ He will be empowered by \_\_\_\_\_.
  
- ➔ He will rule through \_\_\_\_\_.

→ He will demand to \_\_\_\_\_ as God.

- HIS THIRST FOR POWER

→ He will use \_\_\_\_\_ as well as deception to seize control.

- HIS PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS.

→ He will oppress the Jewish people and \_\_\_\_\_ the Jewish temple.

→ He will fight directly against \_\_\_\_\_.

- HIS EVENTUAL DEFEAT AND DESTRUCTION.

→ He will be destroyed not by human hands, but by \_\_\_\_\_.

### The epilogue

*27 And I, Daniel, was overcome and lay sick for some days. Then I rose and went about the king's business, but I was appalled by the vision and did not understand it.*

- What hits you spiritually affects you \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

- Knowledge of the end should motivate \_\_\_\_\_ in the present.

## Antiochus IV Epiphanes as a Type of the AntiChrist

#	Reference	Prophecy Statement	Historical Fulfillment in Antiochus IV Epiphanes	Foreshadowing of End-Time Antichrist
1	Dan 8:9	Out of one of them came a little horn - arises from one of the four Greek horns	Antiochus came from the Seleucid kingdom, one of the four divisions of Alexander's empire after his death	The Antichrist will arise from a reconstituted or revived empire (often interpreted as a revived Roman or Mediterranean confederation) with sudden emergence from relative obscurity.
2	Dan 8:9	Grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the glorious land	Antiochus campaigned south into Egypt (169-168 BC), east into Persia/Elymais, and repeatedly invaded Judea (the "beautiful land")	The Antichrist will expand his dominion toward key regions including the Middle East and Israel ("the glorious land"), with military campaigns in multiple directions to consolidate global power.
3	Dan 8:10	Grew up to the host of heaven	Symbolic of his attack on God's people and their worship; he treated Israel's covenant community with presumptuous arrogance	The Antichrist will wage war against God's people (tribulation saints, believing Israel) with arrogant presumption, persecuting those who are figuratively "the host of heaven."
4	Dan 8:10	Cast down some of the host and some of the stars to the ground and trampled them	Massacres in Jerusalem and Judea: slaughter and enslavement of tens of thousands of Jews; the elite ("stars") were killed and humiliated	The Antichrist will destroy both prominent leaders ("stars") and masses of believers in a great tribulation persecution, trampling God's people and casting them down.
5	Dan 8:11	Exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host	Took the title "Epiphanes" ("manifest god"), promoted the cult of Zeus, and acted as if he could overrule Israel's God	The Antichrist will exalt himself above every god, proclaim himself deity in the temple (2 Thess 2:4), and oppose Christ ("the Prince of the host") directly in blasphemous self-worship.
6	Dan 8:11	By him the daily sacrifice was taken away	In 167-168 BC he forbade daily temple sacrifices, outlawed standard Jewish offerings, replaced them with pagan rites	The Antichrist will stop sacrifices in a rebuilt temple at the mid-point of the tribulation (Dan 9:27), abolishing worship and imposing false worship centered on himself.
7	Dan 8:11	The place of his sanctuary was cast down	Plundered the temple, desecrated its altar, profaned the sanctuary so it ceased functioning as Yahweh's holy house	The Antichrist will desecrate the future temple, setting up the "abomination of desolation" (Matt 24:15) and casting down true worship in favor of idolatrous worship of himself or his image.
8	Dan 8:12	A host was given over to the horn because of transgression	Many Jews, including high priest Menelaus, collaborated with Antiochus; his troops stationed in the Akra fortress subdued Jerusalem	Because of Israel's partial hardness and apostasy, many will collaborate with the Antichrist; he will have military forces and enablers who facilitate his control over Jerusalem and the temple.
9	Dan 8:12	It opposed the daily sacrifices	Decrees banned circumcision, Sabbath, and sacrificial worship, coercing Jews to abandon temple liturgy for Hellenistic practices	The Antichrist will outlaw true worship, force abandonment of covenant practices, and impose a counterfeit religious system that opposes the worship of the true God.
10	Dan 8:12	He cast truth to the ground	Burned Torah scrolls, executed those who possessed or practiced the Law, sought to eradicate Mosaic observance	The Antichrist will suppress Scripture and truth, promoting lies and deception (2 Thess 2:9-12), executing those who hold to God's Word, casting down divine revelation in favor of his own propaganda.
11	Dan 8:12	He did all this and prospered	For several years his policies seemed successful: Hellenization advanced, temple control held, military victories achieved	The Antichrist will appear unstoppable and successful for a time (Rev 13:4, "Who is able to make war with him?"), prospering in his evil schemes until God intervenes at Christ's return.
12	Dan 8:14	For 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary shall be restored	Period from desecration (altar to Zeus, 168/167 BC) to temple rededication under Judas Maccabeus in 164 BC (Hanukkah)	The Antichrist's desecration and persecution will be time-limited by God's sovereign decree; the sanctuary will be cleansed and restored when Christ returns to establish His millennial kingdom.

## Antiochus IV Epiphanes as a Type of the AntiChrist - page 2

13	Dan 8:23	In the latter time of their kingdom, when transgressors have reached their fullness, a king shall arise	Antiochus' reign (175-164 BC) comes in the later phase of the Seleucid kingdom, long after Alexander, when Hellenistic power was fracturing	The Antichrist will emerge in the "latter time" of the final Gentile world system, at the end of the age when human rebellion and apostasy have reached their climax and fullness.
14	Dan 8:23	A king of fierce countenance	Contemporary and later Jewish sources portray Antiochus as brutal and cruel, delighting in savage repression and torture of faithful Jews	The Antichrist will be ruthless, cruel, and terrifying in appearance and demeanor, showing no mercy to those who resist his rule, delighting in brutality and oppression.
15	Dan 8:23	Understanding dark sentences / skilled in intrigue	Gained power through political manipulation, back-room deals with rival high priests, deceptive diplomacy with Egypt and Rome	The Antichrist will rise through cunning political intrigue, deceptive diplomacy, and manipulation, using smooth speech and dark schemes to gain and consolidate power (Dan 11:21, 11:32).
16	Dan 8:24	His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power	His dominance depended on larger Seleucid imperial forces and circumstances; theologically, on God's permissive decree	The Antichrist's power will be satanic in origin (Rev 13:2, "the dragon gave him his power"), empowered by demonic forces yet permitted under God's sovereign plan for the end times.
17	Dan 8:24	He shall destroy fearfully	Accounts describe about 80,000 killed or sold into slavery in Jerusalem in a few days; persecutions notorious for ferocity	The Antichrist will cause unprecedented destruction and slaughter during the great tribulation (Matt 24:21), with fearful carnage and martyrdom on a global scale.
18	Dan 8:24	He shall prosper and thrive	Initially expanded Seleucid influence, imposed Hellenization successfully, enriched himself by temple plunder and tribute	The Antichrist will initially prosper in all his endeavors—military conquests, economic control (Rev 13:16-17), religious dominance—appearing invincible until divine judgment falls.
19	Dan 8:24	He shall destroy the mighty and also the holy people	Both political elites and faithful Jews suffered: leaders executed, communities decimated, martyrs like the Maccabean brothers killed	The Antichrist will destroy both powerful world leaders who resist him and will wage war against the saints (Rev 13:7), martyring countless believers during the tribulation.
20	Dan 8:25	Through his cunning he shall cause deceit to prosper under his hand	Used deceptive promises, imposed apostate high priests, manipulated treaties, leveraging lies and flattery as tools of rule	The Antichrist's reign will be marked by deception and lies (2 Thess 2:9-11), false signs and wonders, manipulative covenants (Dan 9:27), and systematic propagation of falsehood.
21	Dan 8:25	He shall exalt himself in his heart	Self-designation as "God Manifest," sacrilege in the temple, contempt for Israel's God reveal striking self-exaltation	The Antichrist will exalt himself in his heart above all deities, sitting in God's temple proclaiming himself to be God (2 Thess 2:4), the ultimate expression of human pride and rebellion.
22	Dan 8:25	He shall destroy many in their prosperity / at ease	Struck Jerusalem and communities unexpectedly, including assaults timed to catch Jews unprepared (e.g., on the Sabbath)	The Antichrist will bring sudden destruction on those living in false peace and security (1 Thess 5:3), striking when people are unprepared, catching the world off guard.
23	Dan 8:25	He shall even rise against the Prince of princes	By attacking the temple, outlawing Yahweh's worship, and desecrating what was uniquely God's, he waged war on Israel's God	The Antichrist will rise in direct opposition to Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords ("Prince of princes"), waging war against the Lamb at Armageddon (Rev 19:19).
24	Dan 8:25	He shall be broken without human hand	Did not die in battle or by assassination but from sudden, humiliating disease during eastern campaign—interpreted as divine judgment	The Antichrist will be destroyed not by human armies but by direct divine intervention—by the breath of Christ's mouth and the brightness of His coming (2 Thess 2:8), cast alive into the lake of fire (Rev 19:20).

### Reflection and Discussion Questions

- ▶ What is your biggest take-away from this lesson on Daniel’s vision of the ram and goat?
- ▶ Where do you see the “ram mentality” in your life—relying on your own strength, success, or momentum—and how might that be blinding you to your need for God?
- ▶ The goat rises quickly and conquers powerfully—but its great horn is suddenly broken. What does this teach us about the stability of human power, achievement, or influence? Where are you tempted to place too much confidence in something temporary?
- ▶ The “little horn” grows out of chaos and brings destruction through deception and opposition to God. In what ways do you see subtle compromise or cultural pressure trying to pull you away from truth today—and how can you resist it?
- ▶ Daniel is overwhelmed by the vision but still called to understand and respond. When God’s plans feel confusing, heavy, or even unsettling, how do you stay faithful and grounded instead of discouraged or passive?

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**Before the next session:** Read Daniel 9 three times in three different versions.