

“Beasts, Angels, and End Times”
“Daniel—A Testimony to the Power of God” — Part 9
Daniel 8

***The major emphasis of the rest of the book of Daniel
is God’s plan for the Nation of Israel in the end times!***

God chose the Nation of Israel to be the vehicle of His revelation and redemption.
Through the Jewish people came the revelation of the one true and living God.
Through the Jewish people came the written Scriptures.
Through the Jewish people came Jesus Christ.

...salvation is from the Jews. John 4:22

God is not finished with His people. He will bring to pass all He has declared through His prophets.

The Five Main Characters of Daniel’s Prophecy:

1. Daniel, prophet of God

In the third year of King Belshazzar's reign, I, Daniel, had a vision, after the one that had already appeared to me. In my vision I saw myself in the citadel of Susa in the province of Elam; in the vision I was beside the Ulai Canal. Daniel 8:1-2

2. Cyrus, King of Persia

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 he charged toward the west and the north and the south. No animal could stand against him, and none could rescue from his power. He did as he pleased and became great.

Daniel 8:3-4

The two-horned ram that you saw represents the kings of Media and Persia. Daniel 8:20

Why did God call Cyrus? (Isa. 44:28; Ezra 1:1-3; Isa. 45:1)
Cyrus created the largest empire in the East until Alexander.
Cyrus permitted the people of Israel to return to their land.

3. Alexander the Great

As I was thinking about this, suddenly a goat with a prominent horn between his eyes came from the west, crossing the whole earth without touching the ground. He came toward the two-horned ram I had seen standing beside the canal and charged at him in great rage. I saw him attack the ram furiously, striking the ram and shattering his two horns. The ram was powerless to stand against him; the goat knocked him to the ground

and trampled on him, and none could rescue the ram from his power. The goat became very great, but at the height of his power his large horn was broken off, and in its place four prominent horns grew up toward the four winds of heaven. Daniel 8:5-8

The shaggy goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between his 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. Daniel 8:21-22

God used Alexander to prepare the world for the coming of Christ.
The common Greek became the language of the New Testament.
He literally wed the East and the West.
What Alexander began, Rome finished in preparing the world for the coming of Christ.
All of this contributed to Christians taking the Gospel message throughout the Roman Empire.

4. Antiochus IV “Epiphanes”, self-proclaimed God

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 Prince of the host; it took away the daily sacrifice from him, and the place of his sanctuary was brought low. Because of rebellion, the host [of the saints] 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, and the surrender of the sanctuary and of the host that will be trampled underfoot?" He said to me, "It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be re-consecrated." Daniel 8:9-14

He gave himself the name Epiphanes which means “illustrious manifestation.”
He prohibited the Jews from honoring the Sabbath.
He replaced the Jewish altar with an altar to Zeus and sacrificed a pig on it.
Jerusalem was eventually delivered on December 14, 165 B.C. by Judas Maccabeus.
2,300 days represents the time between the desecration and the cleansing of the temple.

5. The Antichrist, the world's last evil ruler

"In the latter part of their reign, when rebels have become completely wicked, a stern-faced 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 the mighty men and 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." Daniel 8:23-26

Compare the characteristics of Antiochus and Antichrist:

Both begin modestly and increase in power.

Both blaspheme God with foul mouths.

Both persecute the Jewish people.

Both claim to be gods and put images in the temple.

Both impose their own religion on the people.

Both are opposed by a believing remnant.

Both are energized by the devil and are great deceivers.

Both seem to succeed marvelously and seem to be invincible.

Both are defeated!

Daniel's response and ours:

I, Daniel, was exhausted and lay ill for several days. Then I got up and went about the king's business. I was appalled by the vision; it was beyond understanding.

Daniel 8:27

For Daniel, understanding prophecy wasn't a matter of satisfying curiosity. He was concerned about his people, Israel. He so identified with them and what was ahead that it made him ill.

As you discover these things, where is your heart for the people you know and God's people?

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...

Matthew 28:19

"Beasts, Angels and End Times" is ninth in a series titled, "Daniel—A Testimony to the Power of God." July 14, 2013. All verses are from the New International version unless noted.