

The Vision of the Ram and the Goat

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The book of Daniel chapter 8 describes the conquests of the Medo-Persian Empire and the rise of the Greek Empire, with a focus on the prophetic significance of the events.

Scripture: Daniel 8:20-27

Topics: "End Times", "Eschatology"

Description

In Daniel 8, the vision of the ram and the he goat is interpreted to represent the kings of Media and Persia and the king of Grecia, identified as Alexander the Great. The four horns that replace the great horn symbolize the four kingdoms that arise after Alexander's death. The passage then shifts to describe a future ruler who will arise in the latter time, characterized by fierce countenance, intelligence, and great power not of his own. This ruler will persecute Israel, oppose the Prince of princes, and be broken without human intervention. The vision, although historically fulfilled in part by Antiochus Epiphanes, foreshadows a future world ruler who will dominate the end times.

Transcript

Two important factors mark Daniel 8 as the beginning of a new section. First, beginning with this chapter, the language returns to Hebrew instead of the Aramaic used by Daniel from 2:4 through 7:28. Second, the change of language is in keeping with the change in thought introduced by this chapter. From here to the end of Daniel, the prophecy, even though it concerns the Gentiles, is occupied with human history as it relates to Israel. Therefore, although many expositors divide the book of Daniel into two halves (1-6 and 7-12), there are also good reasons for dividing Daniel into three sections (1, 2-7, 8-12).402

The first of Daniel's own visions recorded in Daniel 7 is a broad summary of the times of the Gentiles, with emphasis on the climactic events culminating in the second coming of Christ to the earth. Beginning in chapter 8, Daniel's second vision concerns the empires of Persia and Greece as they relate to Israel. Under Persian government, Israelites went back to rebuild their land and their city, Jerusalem. Under Grecian domination, in particular under Antiochus Epiphanes, the city and the temple were again desolated. Daniel 9 presents Israel's history from the time of Ezra and Nehemiah to the inauguration of the kingdom from heaven at the second coming of Christ immediately preceded by the time of great trouble for Israel. Chapters 10-11 reveal the events relating the Persian and Greek Empires to Israel, with emphasis on the Gentile oppression of Israel. The final section, 11:36--12:13, deals with the end of the age, the period of the revived Roman Empire, and the deliverance of Israel. It is fitting that the last five chapters of

Daniel should be written in Hebrew, the language of Israel.

The Vision at Shushan

8:1-2 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. 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; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai.

The second vision of Daniel occurred, according to verse 1, "in the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar," in other words, about two years after the vision of chapter 7. Because it took place in the reign of Belshazzar, it is clear that both chapter 7 and 8 chronologically occur before chapter 5, the night of Belshazzar's feast. Before archeological discoveries confirmed the historical character of Belshazzar, it was common for critical expositors to conclude that the events of chapter 8 occurred immediately before chapter 5. Some recent expositors also follow this interpretation, although there is no ground for it. For instance, A. C. Gaebelein states, "It was the year when the feast of blasphemy was held and Babylon fell. Then God took His faithful servant aside and revealed to him new things concerning the future."⁴⁰³ Edward Young assumes without evidence the same chronology, stating, "At any rate, this vision occurred shortly before the events of the fatal night of ch. 5."⁴⁰⁴ Zockler also places this chapter "shortly before the end of this king [Belshazzar]."⁴⁰⁵

On the basis of The Babylonian Chronicle, it is now known that Nabonidus began his reign in 556 b.c, and apparently Belshazzar became co-regent three years later, 553 b.c, when Nabonidus took residence at Teima, as brought out in chapter 5. Belshazzar previously had served in other royal capacities beginning 560 b.c. Accordingly, if the vision of chapter 7 occurred in 553 b.c, the vision of chapter 8 occurred in 551 b.c, or twelve years before Belshazzar's feast in chapter 5. There is, therefore, no support for placing Daniel 8 near the downfall of Babylon as was the customary chronology before The Babylonian Chronicle was discovered. A. L. Oppenheim points out that Belshazzar was officially recognized as coregent while also the crown prince. He cites two legal documents dated in the twelfth and thirteenth years of Nabonidus, the king, and Bel-shar-usur, a variation of Belshazzar, the crown prince, for which there is no parallel in cuneiform literature.⁴⁰⁶ This confirms beyond question both the role of Belshazzar as coregent and the dating of this vision before 539 b.c, the date of Belshazzar's death, and indicates the probability of the year 551 b.c as the date of the vision as the sixth year of Nabonidus as well as the third year of Belshazzar.

The vision of chapter 8 is somewhat different in character from that of chapter 7, as it apparently did not occur in a dream or in a night vision. As Young correctly says, "This vision was not a dream vision like that of ch. 7."⁴⁰⁷ Keil says in a similar way, "But not in a dream as that was, but while he was awake."⁴⁰⁸ Daniel is careful to distinguish not only the character of the vision but its time by adding "after that which appeared unto me at the first," that is, the vision of chapter 7.

Although this much is clear, expositors have differed widely as to whether Daniel was in the palace at Shushan in the province of Elam, by the river Ulai (as 5:2 indicates) or was transported there in vision and actually was in Babylon at the time. Ancient Susa (called Shushan in the King James Version), about 150 miles north of the present head of the Persian Gulf, was situated midway between Ecbatana and Persepolis, and later became one of the main residences of the Persian kings. According to Josephus, Daniel was actually in Elam.⁴⁰⁹ Keil notes that Bertholdt and Rosenmuller interpret Daniel as stating that

he is actually in Shushan (Susa). He also notes that Bertholdt uses this to substantiate a charge of error against the pseudo-Daniel.⁴¹⁰

Most expositors, whether liberal or conservative, understand Daniel 8 to teach that Daniel was actually in Babylon and in vision only was transported to Shushan. Montgomery cites the overwhelming weight of scholarship on this point that Daniel was there only in vision, which is supported by the Syriac version and the Vulgate, and held by John Calvin and many contemporary writers.⁴¹¹ Ezekiel also was transported in vision, presumably (Eze 8:3; 40:1 ff.).

The question as to whether Babylon at this time controlled ancient Susa is debated but is beside the point; in any case, in the vision Daniel is projected forward into the prophetic future of the Persian and Grecian Empires.

The probability is that Babylon did not control this city or area at this time, and this perhaps accounts for Daniel's astonishment as he contemplated the vision to find that he was in this place rather than at Babylon. The expression Shushan the palace reoccurs in historical sections dealing with the Persian Empire (Neh 1:1; Est 1:2, 5; 2:3, 5). By the palace is probably meant the king's residence, which was more in the form of a castle or fortress than merely a luxurious building. Shushan the palace, nevertheless, was destined in the Persian Empire to become the capital rather than Babylon. This was unknown at the time that this vision was given to Daniel, although Susa had served as the capital of the Elamites in antiquity; and conservative scholars find a genuine prophetic prediction in this reference to Susa.

Daniel finds it necessary to define in particular the location of this city, something a second-century pseudo-Daniel would not have had to do. Some critics have attempted to prove that Daniel was in error because Elam was probably not a province of Babylon at that time; however, Daniel does not literally say that it was.⁴¹² Daniel also mentions that he was by "the river of Ulai." In regard to this stream near ancient Susa, Montgomery states, "The Ulai can best be identified with an artificial canal which connected the rivers Choastes and Coprates and ran close by Susa."⁴¹³

In a word, Daniel finds himself projected in vision to a town little known at that time and unsuspected for future grandeur, but yet destined to be the important capital of Persia, the home of Esther, and the city from which Nehemiah came to Jerusalem. Beginning in 1884, the site of ancient Susa, then a large mound, has been explored and has divulged many archeological treasures. The code of Hammurabi was found there in 1901. The famous palace referred to by Daniel, Esther and Nehemiah was begun by Darius I and enlarged by later kings. Remains of its magnificence can still be seen near the modern village of Shush.⁴¹⁴ This unusual setting described in detail by Daniel in the opening verses of the eighth chapter now becomes the stage on which a great drama is portrayed in symbol describing the conquests of the second and third empires.

The Ram with the Two Horns

8:3-4 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. 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.

Daniel, in his vision, sees a ram with two horns which are unequal, one higher than the other, and the higher one growing out of the ram last. As Daniel watches, he sees the ram pushing westward, northward,

and southward; but no mention is made of pushing toward the east. No other beast is found to stand before the ram nor was anyone, whether man or beast, able to deliver from his power. As Daniel summarizes it, the ram does according to his will and becomes great.

The interpretation is provided in Daniel 8:20 that the ram is Medo-Persia, with the two horns representing its major kings. The fact that the ram represents both the Median and Persian Empires in their combined states rather than as separate empires is another important proof that the critics are wrong. The critics attempt to prove, on the basis of the reference to Darius the Mede, that Daniel erroneously taught two empires, first a Median and then a Persian. This, of course, is contradicted by history; and critics use this in attempt to prove Daniel in error. The critics, however, attribute to Daniel what he does not teach; and the problem is their own faulty interpretation. As Young puts it, "Neither here or elsewhere does Dan. conceive of an independently existing Median empire."⁴¹⁵ Historically, it was the combination of the Medes and the Persians which proved irresistible for almost two hundred years, until Alexander the Great came on the scene.⁴¹⁶

The portrayal of the two horns representing the two major aspects of the Medo-Persian Empire, that is, the Medes and the Persians, is very accurate, as the Persians coming up last and represented by the higher horn were also the more prominent and powerful. The directions which represent the conquests of the ram include all except east. Although Persia did expand to the east, its principal movement was to the west, north and south. It is the accuracy of this portrayal, rather than any alleged inaccuracy, which is embarrassing to the critic who does not want to accept a sixth-century Daniel who wrote genuine prophecy.

In regard to the use of a ram to represent that great empire, Keil observes, "In the Bundehesch the guardian spirit of the Persian kingdom appears under the form of a ram with clean feet and sharp-pointed horns, and... the Persian king, when he stood at the head of his army, bore, instead of the diadem, the head of a ram."⁴¹⁷ The references to beasts, as Keil states, "represent kingdoms and nations."⁴¹⁸

Not only are both the ram and the goat mentioned in the Old Testament as symbols of power, but Cumont has noted that different lands were assigned to the signs of the Zodiac according to astronomical geography. In this view, Persia is thought of as under the zodiacal sign of Aries, the "ram," and Greece as sharing with Syria, the principal territory of the Seleucid monarchy, the zodiacal sign of Capricorn, the "goat." The word Capricorn is derived from the Latin, caper, a goat and cornu, a horn.⁴¹⁹ Taken as a whole, as Driver states, "The verse describes the irresistible advances of the Persian arms, especially in the direction of Palestine, Asia Minor, and Egypt, with particular allusion to the conquests of Cyrus and Cambyses."⁴²⁰

The He Goat from the West

8:5-7 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. 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. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler 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.

Interpreters of Daniel 8 are generally agreed that the he goat or literally, "buck of the goats,"⁴²¹ represents the king of Greece, and more particularly the single important horn between its eyes, as also

stated in Daniel 8:21, is "the first king," that is, Alexander the Great. All the facts about this goat and his activities obviously anticipate the dynamic role of Alexander. Like Alexander, the he goat comes "from the west on the face of the whole earth," that is, his conquests beginning in Greece move east and cover the entire territory. The implication in the vision, where it states that the he goat "touched not the ground," is the impression of tremendous speed, which characterized the conquest of Alexander. The unusual horn, one large horn instead of the normal two, symbolically represents the single leadership provided by Alexander.

As Daniel considers, the he goat attacks the ram. The ram is identified with the one seen earlier in the vision as standing before the river. An unusual feature of the attack by the he goat is that it is accomplished "in the fury of his power." There was considerable feeling based upon the historical background in which the Persians had attacked Greece earlier in history. Now it was time for Greek retaliation against the Persians. The goat accordingly "moved with choler against him," that is, "in great anger," and butting the ram, breaks the ram's two horns. This symbolically refers to the disintegration of the Medo-Persian Empire with the result that the ram had no power to stand before the he goat. The contest ends with the he goat casting the ram to the ground and stamping upon it.

All of this, of course, was fulfilled dramatically in history. The forces of Alexander first met and defeated the Persians at the Granicus River in Asia Minor in May 334 B.C., which was the beginning of the complete conquest of the entire Persian Empire. A year and a half later a battle occurred at Issus (November 333 b.c.) near the northeastern tip of the Mediterranean Sea. The power of Persia was finally broken at Gaugamela near Nineveh in October 331 b.c.⁴²²

There is no discrepancy between history, which records a series of battles, and Daniel's representation that the Persian Empire fell with one blow. Daniel is obviously describing the result rather than the details.⁴²³ That the prophecy is accurate, insofar as it goes, most expositors concede. Here again, the correspondence of the prophecy to later history is so accurate that liberal critics attempt to make it history instead of prophecy.

The divine view of Greece is less complimentary than that of secular historians. Tarn gives high praise of Alexander, for instance: "He [Alexander] was one of the supreme fertilizing forces in history. He lifted the civilized world out of one groove and set it in another; he started a new epoch; nothing could again be as it had been... Particularism was replaced by the idea of the 'inhabited world,' the common possession of civilized men... Greek culture, heretofore practically confined to Greeks, spread throughout the world; and for the use of its inhabitants, in place of the many dialects of Greece, there grew up the form of Greek known as the koine, the 'common speech.'"⁴²⁴ Porteous comments on Tarn's praise, "Not a glimmer of all this appears in the book of Daniel."⁴²⁵ God's view is different from man's.

The Great Horn Broken

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.

As Daniel contemplates in his vision the triumph of the he goat, an unexpected development takes place. The great horn between the eyes of the he goat is broken just when the he goat has reached the pinnacle of its strength. Out of this grows four notable horns described as being "toward the four winds of heaven." Expositors, both liberal and conservative, have interpreted this verse as representing the untimely death of Alexander and the division of his empire into four major sections. Alexander, who had conquered more of

the world than any previous ruler, was not able to conquer himself. Partly due to a strenuous exertion, his dissipated life, and a raging fever, Alexander died in a drunken debauch at Babylon, not yet thirty-three years of age. His death left a great conquest without an effective single leader, and it took about twenty years for the empire to be successfully divided.

Practically all commentators, however, recognize the four horns as symbolic of the four kingdoms of the Diadochi which emerged as follows: (1) Cassander assumed rule over Macedonia and Greece; (2) Lysimachus took control of Thrace, Bithynia, and most of Asia Minor; (3) Seleucus took Syria and the lands to the east including Babylonia; (4) Ptolemy established rule over Egypt and possibly Palestine and Arabia Petraea.⁴²⁶ A fifth contender for political power, Antigonus, was soon defeated. Thus, with remarkable accuracy, Daniel in his prophetic vision predicts that the empire of Alexander was divided into four divisions, not three or less or five or more.

The Emergence of the Little Horn

8:9-10 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. 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.

While there is comparatively little disagreement as to the identity of the ram and the he goat, practically all the controversy over this vision has centered on the meaning of the little horn described in verses 9 and 10. According to Daniel's account, the little horn emerges from one of the four notable horns mentioned in verse 8. The horn, small in the beginning, grows "exceeding great" in three directions: toward the south, toward the east and toward the pleasant land. The implication is that the point of reference is Syria, that "the south" is equal to Egypt, and "the east," in the direction of ancient Medo-Persia or Armenia, and "the pleasant land," or "glorious land" referring to Palestine or Canaan, which lay between Syria and Egypt. The original for "pleasant land" actually means "beauty," with the word for "land" supplied from Daniel 11 (cf. Dan 11:16, 41, 45; Jer 3:19; Eze 20:6, 15; Mai 3:12). Actually, the meaning here may be Jerusalem in particular rather than the land in general.

These conquests, of course, are confirmed in the history of Syria, especially under Antiochus Epiphanes, the eighth king in the Syrian dynasty who reigned 175-164 B.C. (1 Mace 1:10; 6:16). In his lifetime, he conducted military expeditions in relation to all of these areas. Montgomery considers the expression "toward the pleasant land" as a gloss "which is absurd when aligned with the given points of the compass, in which the book is remarkably accurate."⁴²⁷ There is no justification for this deletion from the text, however, as from Daniel's viewpoint in this whole section, the important question is how the times of the Gentiles relate to Israel. The land of Israel indeed became the battle ground between Syria and Egypt, and the setting of some of Antiochus Epiphanes' most significant blasphemous acts against God. According to 1 Maccabees 1:20, Revised Standard Version, Antiochus first invaded Egypt and then Jerusalem: "after subduing Egypt, Antiochus returned in the one hundred and forty-third year. He went up against Israel and came to Jerusalem with a strong force."

As a result of his military conquests, the little horn, representing Antiochus Epiphanes, is said to grow great "even to the host of heaven." He is pictured as casting some of the host and of the stars to the ground and stamping upon them. This difficult prophecy has aroused many technical discussions as that of Montgomery which extends over several pages.⁴²⁸ If the mythological explanations such as identifying stars with heathen gods or the seven planets is discarded and this is considered genuine prophecy,

probably the best explanation is that this prophecy relates to the persecution and destruction of the people of God with its defiance of the angelic hosts who are their protectors, including the power of God Himself. As Leupold says, "That stars should signify God's holy people is not strange when one considers as a background the words that were spoken to Abraham concerning the numerical increase of the people of God, Gen. 15:5; 22:17. To this may be added Dan. 12:3, where a starlike glory is held out to those who "turn many to righteousness." Compare also Matt. 13:43. If the world calls those men and women stars who excel in one or another department of human activity, why should not a similar statement be still more appropriate with reference to God's people?"⁴²⁹ Leupold considers the host and the stars in apposition, that is, "the host even the stars." That Antiochus blasphemed God and heavenly power as well as persecuted the people of Israel, the people of God, is all too evident from history. Even Driver states, "The stars are intended to symbolize the faithful Israelites: cf. Enoch 46:7."⁴³⁰

The Desolation of the Sanctuary

8:11-14 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. 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. 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? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.

Up to Daniel 8:11, it is not difficult to find fulfillment of the vision in the history of the Medo-Persian, Alexandrian, and post-Alexandrian periods. Beginning with verse 11, however, expositors have differed widely as to whether the main import of the passage refers to Antiochus Epiphanes, with complete fulfillment in his lifetime, or whether the passage either primarily or secondarily refers also to the end of the age, that is, the period of great tribulation preceding the second coming of Jesus Christ. The divergence of interpretation is so wide as to be confusing to the student of Daniel. As Montgomery states, verses 11 and 12 "constitute ... the most difficult short passage of the bk."⁴³¹

If the many divergent views can be simplified, they fall into three general classifications. First, the critical view that Daniel was a second-century forgery written by a pseudo-Daniel regards this prophecy as simply history written after the fact and completely fulfilled in Antiochus Epiphanes. This, of course, has been rejected by the great majority of conservative scholars. Second, the view that this is genuine sixth-century B.C. prophecy, but completely fulfilled historically in Antiochus Epiphanes. Edward J. Young is strongly in favor of this interpretation⁴³² and speaks in general for many amillenarians who are conservative interpreters. Third, the view that the prophecy is genuine prediction fulfilled historically in the second century B.C., but typical and anticipatory of the final conflict between God and Gentile rulers at the time of the persecution of Israel prior to the second advent of Christ. The third view sometimes confuses the prophetic and typical interpretations or attempts to find dual fulfillment literally of both aspects of the prophecy. The ultimate decision must rest not simply on verses 11 through 14 but on the interpretation of the prophecy given in verses 20-26.

According to verse 11, the little horn, fulfilled in Antiochus Epiphanes historically, magnifies himself even to the prince of the host. By this is meant that he exalted himself up to the point of claiming divine honor, as brought out in his name Epiphanes which refers to glorious manifestation such as belonged to God. His pretensions are similar to the little horn of Daniel 7:8, 20. Antiochus, however, obviously also directed

blasphemous opposition against God Himself and to this extent magnified himself against God as well as reaching toward the glory and honor belonging to God.

As a specific illustration and supreme act manifesting this attitude, it is stated that he took away the daily offerings and desecrated the sanctuary. "By him," in verse 11, is literally, "from him," that is, from God. By this is meant that Antiochus stopped the morning and evening sacrifices, taking away from God what were daily tokens of Israel's worship.⁴³³ The expression daily sacrifices, from the Hebrew *tamid*, which means "constant," applies to the daily offerings (cf. Ex 29:38 ff.; Num 28:3 ff.). Young, accordingly, feels that it should not be restricted to the morning and evening sacrifices, but that it included all the offerings customarily offered in the temple services.⁴³⁴

This is brought out in 1 Maccabees 1:44-49, referring to the command of Antiochus Epiphanes to depart from the worship of the law of Moses, "And the king sent letters by messengers to Jerusalem and the cities of Judah; he directed them to follow customs strange to the land, to forbid burnt offerings and sacrifices and drink offerings in the sanctuary, to profane Sabbaths and feasts, to defile the sanctuary and the priests, to build altars in sacred precincts and shrines for idols, to sacrifice swine and unclean animals, and to leave their sons uncircumcised. They were to make themselves abominable by everything unclean and profane, so that they should forget the law and change all the ordinances. And whoever does not obey the command of the king shall die" (RSV).

Although it is not necessary to take the expression "the place of his sanctuary was cast down" as meaning destruction by Antiochus of the temple itself, it is of interest that in 1 Maccabees 4:42 ff., in connection with the cleansing of the sanctuary, they literally tore down the altar and built a new one, "they also rebuilt the sanctuary and the interior of the temple, and consecrated the courts" (1 Mace 4:48). As Young comments, "Apparently Antiochus did not actually tear down the temple, although eventually he desecrated it to such a point that it was hardly fit for use."⁴³⁵

The obvious parallel between the cessation of the daily sacrifice by Antiochus Epiphanes and that anticipated in Daniel 9:27, which occurs three and one-half years before the second coming of Christ, has led some expositors to find here evidence for reference to the end of the age and not simply to Antiochus. As far as this prophecy is concerned, however, it did have complete fulfillment in Antiochus.

Verse 12 is a recapitulation of Antiochus Epiphanes' activities against God. The statement that an host was given him apparently refers to the fact that the people of Israel were under his power with divine permission. The phrase against the daily sacrifice can be translated "with the daily sacrifice," that is, the daily sacrifices were also in his power and he was able to substitute a heathen worship. The phrase by reason of transgression should be understood as an extension of this, that is, the daily sacrifices are given in his power in order to permit him to transgress against God. The result is that Antiochus "cast down the truth to the ground," that is, the truth of the law of Moses, practiced his activities, and seemingly prospered. Although the translation of this verse is very difficult, conservative scholars generally interpret it to mean that the people of Israel along with their worship are given over to the power of Antiochus Epiphanes with the resulting transgression and blasphemy against God. The extent of departure from the law is indicated in 1 Maccabees 1:44-49 Revised Standard Version.

Having described the nefarious activities of Antiochus Epiphanes, Daniel now records a conversation between two "saints" or "holy ones," apparently angels, concerning the duration of the desecration of the sanctuary. The question is "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 underfoot?"

The answer given in verse 14 has touched off almost endless exegetical controversy. Daniel is informed that the answer to the riddle is "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." The answer is said to be given "unto me," that is, to Daniel rather than to the other angel. Obviously these angels are brought in for Daniel's benefit and the result is that Daniel hears the answer. The interpretation and fulfillment of this passage is to some extent the crux of this entire chapter.

The Seventh Day Adventists understood that the two thousand and three hundred days referred to years which, on the basis of their interpretation, were to culminate in the year 1844 with the second coming of Christ.⁴³⁶ The year-day theory for all practical purposes was excluded by the fact that Christ did not come in 1844 in any real fulfillment of the anticipation of this interpretation.

If the twenty-three hundred days are to be considered as days, instead of years, two basic alternatives are offered. Many have taken this as twenty-three hundred twenty-four hour days. Because the days are related to the cessation of the evening and morning sacrifices, another theory was that the phrase actually referred to eleven hundred and fifty days, that is, twenty-three hundred evenings and mornings as set forth by Ephraim of Syria and Hippolytus.⁴³⁷

Obviously, the interpretation of this difficult time period is determined largely by the expositor's desire to find fulfillment either in history or in parallel prophecies concerning the future. Generally, expositors even of differing schools of eschatological interpretation follow the idea that these are twenty-three hundred literal days. The concept that the period in view is eleven hundred and fifty days also is taken by some to coincide with the three and one-half years of the great tribulation predicted in Daniel 9:27 and elsewhere, even though there is a discrepancy of over one hundred days.

Keil, in his discussion extending over nine pages, concludes,

A Hebrew reader could not possibly understand the period of 2300 evening-mornings of 2300 half days or 1150 whole days, because evening and morning at the creation constituted not the half but the whole day. Still less, in the designation of time, 'till 2300 evening-mornings,' could 'evening-mornings' be understood of the evening and morning sacrifices, and the words be regarded as meaning that till 1150 evening sacrifices and 1150 morning sacrifices are discontinued. We must therefore take the words as they are, i.e., understand them as 2300 whole days.⁴³⁸

Keil supports this by numerous arguments including the fact, "when the Hebrews wished to express separately day and night, the component parts of a day of a week, then the number of both is expressed. They say, e.g., forty days and forty nights (Gen. 7:4, 12; Ex. 24:18; 1 Kings 19:8), and three days and three nights (Jonah 2:1; Matt. 12:40), but not eighty or six days-and-nights, when they wish to speak of forty or three full days."⁴³⁹

If they are literally twenty-three hundred days, what is the fulfillment? The attempts to relate this to the last seven years of the Gentile period referred to in Daniel 9:27 have confused rather than helped the interpretation. Twenty-three hundred days is less than seven years of 360 days, and the half figure of eleven hundred and fifty days is short of the three and one-half years of the great tribulation. Exegetically, a safe course to follow is to find fulfillment in Antiochus Epiphanes, and then proceed to consider what eschatological or unfilled prophecy may be involved.

Innumerable explanations have been attempted to make the twenty-three hundred days coincide with the history of Antiochus Epiphanes. The terminus ad quem of the twenty-three hundred days is taken by most expositors as 164 B.C. when Antiochus Epiphanes died during a military campaign in Media. This permitted the purging of the sanctuary and the return to Jewish worship. Figuring from this date backward twenty-three hundred days would fix the beginning time at 171 b.c. In that year, Onias III, the legitimate high priest, was murdered and a pseudo line of priests assumed power. This would give adequate fulfillment in time for the twenty-three hundred days to elapse at the time of the death of Antiochus. The actual desecration of the temple, however, did not occur until December 25, 167 B.C. when the sacrifices in the temple were forcibly caused to cease and a Greek altar erected in the temple. The actual desecration of the temple lasted only about three years. During this period, Antiochus issued coins with the title "Epiphanes," which claimed that he manifested divine honors and which showed him as beardless and wearing a diadem.⁴⁴⁰

Taking all the evidence into consideration, the best conclusion is that the twenty-three hundred days of Daniel are fulfilled in the period from 171 b.c. and culminated in the death of Antiochus Epiphanes in 164 b.c. The period when the sacrifices ceased was the latter part of this longer period. Although the evidence available today does not offer fulfillment to the precise day, the twenty-three hundred days, obviously a round number, is relatively accurate in defining the period when the Jewish religion began to erode under the persecution of Antiochus, and the period as a whole concluded with his death.

The alternate theories produce more problems than they solve. Considering the days as year-days has provided no fulfillment. Using the figure of eleven hundred and fifty days only creates more problems as it does not fit precisely any scheme of events and has a dubious basis. By far the simplest and most honoring to the Scriptures is the solution that the twenty-three hundred days date from 171 b.c. to 164 b.c. This prophecy may safely be said now to have been fulfilled and does not have any further eschatological significance in the sense of anticipating a future fulfillment. As far as Daniel 8:1-14 is concerned, there is no adequate reason for considering it in any other light than that of fulfilled prophecy from the standpoint of the twentieth century. It is adequately explained in the history of the Medo-Persian and Greek empires, and specifically, in the activities of Antiochus Epiphanes.

Vision Interpreted in Relation to the Time of the End

8:15-19 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. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision. 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. 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. 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.

With the entire vision recorded and, to some extent, already interpreted, Daniel now enters into active participation in the vision and, as in chapter 7, sought an interpretation. According to verse 15, Daniel "sought for the meaning"; and in response to his desire, a personage stood before him described "as the appearance of a man," but obviously an angel. In verse 16, the angel Gabriel is mentioned specifically, and a man's voice is addressed to Gabriel to instruct Daniel in understanding the vision. The man's voice may be that of Michael the Archangel or even the voice of God, but it is not identified in the text. Calvin believes that the man speaking is Christ.⁴⁴¹ Young points out that the word for man in verse 15 is ga,ber,

similar in sound to Gabriel and denoting strength or power.⁴⁴² To this is added el, the word for God, to form the name Gabriel.

Of interest is the fact that this is the first mention in the Bible of a holy angel by name. Gabriel is again mentioned in Daniel 9:21 and in Luke 1:19, 26, where he is the messenger to Zacharias, announcing the future birth of John the Baptist, and to the virgin Mary, announcing the coming birth of Jesus Christ. The only other angel in Scripture named, aside from Satan, is Michael, mentioned in Daniel 10:13, 21; 12:1, and in the New Testament in Jude 9 and Revelation 12:7. The restraint of Scripture in naming angels is in contrast to prolific nomenclature of angels in apocalyptic literature outside the Bible.⁴⁴³

Because of the whole context of the vision, the powerful presence of Gabriel, and the mysterious voice which may be the voice of Deity, Daniel is afraid, actually panic-stricken, and falls on his face. The situation is not much different from that of John the apostle in Revelation 1 at the tremendous vision of the glorified Christ. The words of Gabriel are reassuring, and he instructs Daniel, using the title son of man, and for the first time in the entire chapter indicates that "the time of the end" is in question in relation to the vision.

Although Daniel apparently had been awake in the earlier part of the vision, we now learn that, as Gabriel was speaking, Daniel had fallen into a deep sleep with his face toward the ground. Montgomery translates I was in a deep sleep as "I swooned."⁴⁴⁴ In any event, it is not a natural sleep but the result of his fear described in verse 17. As in the case of Ezekiel (Eze 1:28-2:2), Daniel is aroused: as stated in verse 18, Gabriel "touched me, and set me upright." Porteous suggests that the expression, set me upright (v. 18), "probably means 'made me stand up where I was.' Daniel is keeping his distance."⁴⁴⁵ In verse 19, Gabriel then begins a further explanation of what he introduced in verse 17 concerning the time of the end, making clear his intention to let Daniel know "what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be." In the verses which follow, details of interpretation of the vision are given.

The expression, the indignation, judging by the context (cf. Dan 11:36, where it occurs again) here seems to refer to God's anger against Israel. As in the days of Isaiah, when God used Assyria as His chastening rod (Is 10:5, 25), God in His indignation was using for His corrective purposes the tyranny of Antiochus and "lawless men" (cf. 1 Macc 1:11-15) who carried out Antiochus' orders. In any case, the point is that God is permitting the persecution as a chastening of Israel in this instance.

Because of the introduction of the term the time of the end (Dan 8:17, 19) and the additional expression in verse 19 of "in the last end of the indignation," many scholars find in this chapter reference to the ultimate consummation of Gentile times at the second advent of Christ. Although an adequate fulfillment can be found of the prophecy through verse 14 in the history of the centuries before Christ, how can these references to the time of the end be understood? The entire matter is complicated by references which clearly relate to the end of the Gentile period in Daniel 9:27 and by the extended passage Daniel 11:35 ff., where again the time of the end is mentioned, with additional references in chapter 12. The expositor has numerous options, each of which has some support from reputable scholarship.

Although a great deal of variation is found in details of interpretation, four major views emerge: 1) the historical view that all of Daniel 8 has been fulfilled; (2) the futuristic view, the idea that it is entirely future; (3) the view based upon the principle of dual fulfillment of prophecy, that Daniel 8 is intentionally a prophetic reference both to Antiochus Epiphanes, now fulfilled, and to the end of the age and the final world ruler who persecutes Israel before the second advent; (4) the view that the passage is prophecy,

historically fulfilled but intentionally typical of similar events and personages at the end of the age.

Premillenarians who emphasize historical fulfillment in this chapter invariably agree to typical anticipation. The historical view is supported largely by liberal critics and amillenarians. S. R. Driver, representing liberal criticism, states, for instance, "In ch. 8 there is a 'little horn,' which is admitted on all hands to represent Antiochus Epiphanes, and whose impious character and doings (8:10-12, 25) are in all essentials identical with those attributed to the 'little horn' in ch. 7 (7:8 end 20, 21, 25): as Delitzsch remarks, it is extremely difficult to think that where the description is so similar, two entirely different persons, living in widely different periods of the world's history should be intended."⁴⁴⁶

Driver, identifying the fourth empire of Daniel 7 as the Greek Empire, as liberal critics do in contrast to most conservative expositors, finds the two little horns identical. In keeping with this, he defines the time of the end as meaning from Daniel's standpoint "the period of Antiochus's persecution, together with the short interval consisting of a few months, which followed before his death (xi. 35, 40), that being, in the view of the author, the 'end' of the present condition of things, and the divine kingdom (7:14, 18, 22, 27, 12:2, 3) being established immediately afterwards." Driver goes on, "This sense of 'end' is based probably upon the use of the word in Am. 8:2, Ez. 7:2, 'an end is come, the end is come upon the four corners of the land,' 3, 6: cf. also 'in the time of the iniquity of the end,' Ez. 21:25, 29, 35:5; and Hab. 2:3, 'For the vision is yet for the appointed-time [has reference to the time of its destined fulfillment], and it hasteth toward the end.'"⁴⁴⁷

Conservative amillenarians as represented by Edward J. Young, distinguish between the little horns of chapter 7 and chapter 8. In summarizing his view of the identity of the fourth empire, Young writes, "A comparison of the horns of ch. 8 and the little horn of ch. 7 makes it apparent that the two horns are intended to represent different things. Since the horn of ch. 8 evidently stands for Antiochus Epiphanes, it follows that the little horn of ch. 7 does not stand for Antiochus Epiphanes."⁴⁴⁸ In a word, Young finds chapter 8 completely fulfilled in history. The principal difficulty with the purely historical view is that it provides no satisfactory explanation of the expression the time of the end, the other references in the book of Daniel which use it as the end of the time of the Gentiles, and certain details that are given in the interpretation of the vision.

A second view, in sharp contrast to the historical interpretation, is that which takes the reference to the little horn of chapter 8 as being the same as the little horn of chapter 7 but considers the entire prophecy to be subject to future fulfillment. It is like the liberal critical view in identifying the two horns, but unlike the liberal critical view in relating it to the Roman Empire in the future and not to the Greek Empire of the past. Although only a few writers have taken this position, G. H. Pember takes as "the first clue to the interpretation" the premise: "The vision is no prophecy of Antiochus Epiphanes: the Little Horn is a far more terrible persecutor, who will arise in the last days."⁴⁴⁹

Tregelles argues for the same conclusions, stating, "Further, the four divided kingdoms which formed themselves out of the empire of Alexander were one by one incorporated within the Roman empire, but it is out of one of these kingdoms that the horn of this chapter springs, hence it is clear that he belongs to the Roman earth. Thus the person spoken of in the two chapters are found within the same territorial limits."⁴⁵⁰ Tregelles goes on to compare the similarities between the little horn of chapter 7 and the little horn of chapter 8 as well as a description of the final world ruler in Daniel 11:36-45. Tregelles concludes, "The conclusion from all this appears to be inevitable, that the horn of chapter 7 and chapter 8 are one and the same person."⁴⁵¹

The majority of premillennial expositors, however, have not followed this view because the Roman Empire is not clearly in view in chapter 8, and, as a matter of fact, there are a number of contradictions. Although the territory involved in the various world empires is often the same, this does not prove that the events are the same or the personages are the same; and this is the crux of the matter which Tregelles ignores. Pusey, for instance, points out, "In the Grecian empire, the little horns issues, not from the empire itself, but from one of its four-fold divisions... Antiochus Epiphanes came out of one of the four kingdoms of Alexander's successors, and that kingdom existed in him, as the fourth horn issued in the little horn. But in the fourth empire, the horn proceeds, not out of any one horn, but out of the body of the empire itself. It came up among them [the horns], wholly distinct from them, and destroyed three of them. Such a marked difference in a symbol, otherwise so alike, must be intended to involve a difference in the fact represented."⁴⁵²

While there are obvious similarities between the two little horns of chapter 7 and chapter 8, the differences are important. If the fourth kingdom represented by Daniel 7 is Rome, then obviously the third kingdom represented by the goat in chapter 8 is not Rome. Their characteristics are much different as they arise from different beasts, their horns differ in number, and the end result is different. The Messianic kingdom according to Daniel 7 was going to be erected after the final world empire. This is not true of the period following the he goat in chapter 8. The familiar rule that similarities do not prove identity is applicable here. Two men or events may be alike in many respects but are distinguished by one definite dissimilarity. In this case, there are many factors which contrast the two chapters and their contents.

In view of the problems of a purely historical fulfillment on the one hand or a purely futuristic fulfillment on the other, many expositors have been intrigued with the possibility of a dual fulfillment, that is, that a prophecy fulfilled in part in the past is a foreshadowing of a future event which will completely fulfill the passage. Variations exist in this approach with some taking the entire passage as having dual fulfillment, and others taking Daniel 8:1-14 as historically fulfilled and Daniel 8:15-17 as having dual fulfillment. This latter view was popularized by the Scofield Reference Bible. Both the 1917 and the 1967 edition interpret chapter 8 as being fulfilled historically in Antiochus, but prophetically, beginning with verse 17, as being fulfilled at the end of the age with the second advent.⁴⁵³

Many premillennial writers follow this interpretation. Louis T. Talbot, for instance, writes "When the vision recorded here was given to Daniel, all of it had to do with then prophetic events; whereas we today can look back and see that everything in verses 1-22 refers to men and empires that have come and gone. We read about them in the pages of secular history. But verses 23-27 of the chapter before us have to do with 'a king of fierce countenance' who shall appear 'in the latter time' (v. 23); and he is none other than the Antichrist who is to come. Again, while verses 1-22 have to do with history, yet the men of whom they speak were shadows of that coming 'man of sin,' who is more fully described in the closing verses of the chapter."⁴⁵⁴ Talbot varies from the pattern somewhat by finding typical fulfillment in verses 1-22 and futuristic fulfillment in verses 23-26. Strictly speaking, this does not conform to any of the divisions indicated here, but illustrates that the passage gives prophecy in two different senses.

A number of other expositors find chapter 8 dealing with both Antiochus Epiphanes and the future world ruler. Among them are William Kelly,⁴⁵⁵ Nathaniel West,⁴⁵⁶ and Joseph A. Seiss.⁴⁵⁷

This view is ably summarized by J. Dwight Pentecost. Pentecost gives a most illuminating overall view of chapters 7 through 12 in the following statement: "The key to understanding chapters 7 through 12 of Daniel's prophecy is to understand that Daniel is focusing his attention on this one great ruler and his

kingdom which will arise in the end time. And while Daniel may use historical reference and refer to events which to us may be fulfilled, Daniel is thinking of them only to give us more details about this final form of Gentile world power and its ruler who will reign on the earth. In Daniel chapter 8, we have another reference to this one. Daniel describes a king who is going to conquer the Medo-Persian Empire. This is an historical event that took place several centuries after Daniel lived. There was an individual that came out of the Grecian Empire who was a great enemy of the nation Israel. We know him as Antiochus Epiphanes. Antiochus Epiphanes was a ruler who sought to show his contempt for Palestine, the Jews, and the Jewish religion by going to the temple in Jerusalem with a sow which he slaughtered and put its blood upon the altar. This man was known as one who desolated, or 'the desolator.' But this passage in Daniel 8 is speaking not only of Antiochus in his desolation and his desecration of the Temple; it is looking forward to the great desolator who would come, the one who is called 'the little horn' in Daniel 7. In Daniel 8:23 we read of this one and his ministry."⁴⁵⁸

Pentecost summarizes the facts from Daniel 8:23-25 as a description of the beast in that (1) he is to appear in the latter times of Israel's history (Dan 8:23); (2) through alliance with other nations, he achieves worldwide influence (Dan 8:24); (3) a peace program helps his rise to power (Dan 8:25); (4) he is extremely intelligent and persuasive (Dan 8:23); (5) he is characterized by Satanic control (Dan 8:24); (6) he is a great adversary against Israel and the prince of princes (Dan 8:24-25); (7) a direct judgment from God terminates his rule (Dan 8:25).⁴⁵⁹

It may be concluded that many premillennial expositors find a dual fulfillment in Daniel 8: some of them achieve this by a division of the first part of the chapter as historically fulfilled and the last part prophetically future; some regard the whole chapter as having, in some sense, a dual fulfillment historically as well as in the future; but most of them find the futuristic elements emphasized, especially in the interpretation of the vision.

A variation of the view that the last part of the chapter is specifically futuristic is found in the interpretation which has much to commend itself. This variation regards the entire chapter as historically fulfilled in Antiochus, but to varying degrees foreshadowing typically the future world ruler who would dominate the situation at the end of the times of the Gentiles. In any case, the passage intentionally goes beyond Antiochus to provide prophetic foreshadowing of the final Gentile ruler.

The Interpretation of the Ram and the Rough Goat

8:20-22 The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.

The interpretation of the ram and the goat vision as given in verses 20-21 makes explicit what has been assumed in preceding exegesis. Most significant is the fact that Media and Persia are regarded as one empire, refuting the liberal notion that Daniel taught the empire of Media was separate from Persia, which liberals use to justify the exegesis that the second and third empires of Daniel 7 were Media and Persia. All agree that history does not support this, and the liberal interpretation assumes that Daniel was in error. Here the matter is made clear by Daniel himself, and it is evident that the critics are guilty of attributing to Daniel something he did not teach. The goat described as "rough" or shaggy, although called "the king of Grecia," is an obvious reference to the kingdom as a whole, as the great horn between its eyes is identified as the first king. Practically everyone agrees that this is Alexander the Great.

The four kingdoms represented by the four horns which replaced the great horn that was broken are identified as four kingdoms arising from the he goat nation. They are described as not having the power of the great horn. Aside from expositors pressed to relate this to the Roman empire, where there is no reasonable parallel, the four kingdoms are obviously the four generals of Alexander who partitioned his empire as previously noted. Most expositors agree that verses 20-22 have been fulfilled completely in history in connection with the Medo-Persian and Greek empires and the four divisions following Alexander the Great. The exegetical problems arise in the passage which follows.

The Latter Time of the Kingdom

8:23-26 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. 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. 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. 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.

In this section of Daniel 8, an individual is pictured prophetically who is said to have the following characteristics: (1) he will appear "in the latter time of their kingdom," that is, of the four kingdoms of verse 22; (2) he will appear "when the transgressors are come to the full"; (3) he will be "a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences," that is, having a strong or bold countenance and able to interpret riddles, a mark of intelligence (1 Ki 10:1); (4) he shall have great power but his power shall be derived from another (either God, Satan, Alexander the Great); (5) he shall accomplish great exploits including destroying Israel, the mighty and holy people; (6) by his policies "he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand," always busy hatching plots (1 Macc 1:16-51), that is, wickedness shall be on the increase; (7) he shall exalt himself, as did Antiochus Epiphanes; (8) by means of a false peace, he shall destroy many people; (9) he shall oppose "the Prince of princes"; (10) in the end "he shall be broken without hand" (Antiochus died of a foul disease), that is, his power shall be destroyed without human intervention. Finally, Daniel is cautioned that the total vision is true, but the understanding of it shall be delayed for many days as well as its fulfillment.

A careful scrutiny of these many points will justify the conclusion that it is possible to explain all of these elements as fulfilled historically in Antiochus Epiphanes. Most of the factors are obvious and the principal difficulty is occasioned by the expression in the latter time of their kingdom and in the statement he shall stand up against the Prince of princes. Antiochus Epiphanes, of course, did arise in the latter time of the Syrian kingdom. However, the use of other terms such as the end in verses 17 and 19, and the last end of the indignation in verse 19 are difficult to harmonize with Antiochus Epiphanes.

It is also objected, as expressed by W. C. Stevens, "The time of Antiochus was in the former time of those kingdoms. His day was not even in the latter time of the old Grecian Empire; for he came to his end more than one hundred years before the Grecian Empire ended. The simple solution is that those four kingdoms are to have 'a latter time'; i.e., they are to be again represented territorially as four kingdoms in the last days at the Times of the Gentiles."⁴⁶⁰ The expression the end frequently occurs in references in Daniel 9:26; 11:6, 27, 35, 40, 45; 12:4, 6, 9, 13.

Another problem is the statement that the king "shall also stand up against the Prince of princes." H. A. Ironside expresses a common viewpoint that the "Prince of princes can be none other than the Messiah; consequently, these words were not fulfilled in the life and death of Antiochus."⁴⁶¹ However, this objection is not unanswerable, because opposition to God, to Israel, and to the Messianic hope in general, which characterized blasphemers of the Old Testament, can well be interpreted as standing up against "the Prince of princes." After all, Christ existed in Old Testament times as God and as the Angel of Jehovah and as the defender of Israel.

Taken as a whole, the principal problem of the passage when interpreted as prophecy fulfilled completely in Antiochus is the allusions to the end of the age. These are hard to understand as relating to Antiochus in view of the larger picture of Daniel 7 which concludes with the second advent of Christ. It is for this reason, as well as for the many details in the passage, that many expositors believe the interpretation goes beyond the vision. If the vision itself of the little horn can be fulfilled in Antiochus Epiphanes, the interpretation given by the angel seems to go beyond Antiochus to the final world ruler.

Some premillennial interpreters, however, convinced of the futuristic character of the interpretation of the vision, identify the personage here as a different future character than the little horn of Daniel 7. The little horn of Daniel 7 is identified as a Roman and a future world dictator, whereas the little horn of Daniel 8 in its futuristic interpretation is understood by them to refer to the king of the north in Daniel 11:6-15, who is also identified with "the Assyrian" (Mic 5:5-6).⁴⁶² Contemporary expositors, however, generally interpret these references to Assyria in other prophetic passages as either already fulfilled in the previous invasion of the Holy Land by Assyria or a description of Assyria in the millennial kingdom. These passages then do not become relevant to Daniel 8.

It may be concluded that this difficult passage apparently goes beyond that which is historically fulfilled in Antiochus Epiphanes to foreshadow a future personage often identified as the world ruler of the end time. In many respects this ruler carries on a persecution of Israel and desecration of the temple similar to what was accomplished historically by Antiochus. This interpretation of the vision may be regarded as an illustration of double fulfillment of prophecy or, using Antiochus as a type, the interpretation may go on to reveal additional facts which go beyond the type in describing the ultimate king who will oppose Israel in the last days. He indeed will be "broken without hand" at the time of the second advent of Jesus Christ.

In concluding the interpretation, Gabriel makes plain that the vision will not become immediately understandable to Daniel and that its fulfillment will occupy many days.

Effect on Daniel

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.

As a result of the tremendous vision given to Daniel and his exhaustion because of it, Daniel records that he fainted and was sick for days thereafter. Upon his recovery, he was able to resume his conduct of the king's business. Jeffrey notes that Daniel by his immediate resumption of his work in the king's service proves that he had been in Babylon all the time, and that his presence in Susa was purely visionary.⁴⁶³

The dramatic character of the vision and its tremendous implications, although not understandable to Daniel, remained in his mind. But he could find none that could give him the complete interpretation. It is obvious that the intent of the vision was to record the prophecy for the benefit of future generations rather

than for Daniel himself. Unlike the previous instances where Daniel was the interpreter of divine revelation, here Daniel becomes the recorder of it without understanding all that he wrote or experienced.

The emphasis of the eighth chapter of Daniel is on prophecy as it relates to Israel; and for this reason, the little horn is given prominence both in the vision and in the interpretation. The times of the Gentiles, although not entirely a period of persecution of Israel, often resulted in great trial to them. Of the four great world empires anticipated by Daniel, only the Persian empire was relatively kind to the Jew. As Christ Himself indicated in Luke 21:24, the times of the Gentiles is characterized by the treading down of Jerusalem, and the subjugation and persecution of the people of Israel.

402 Cf. R. D. Culver, Daniel and the Latter Days, pp. 95-104.

403 A. C. Gaebelein, The Prophet Daniel, p. 94.

404 E. J. Young, The Prophecy of Daniel, p. 165.

405 Otto Zockler, "The Book of the Prophet Daniel," in A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, 13:171; cf. pp. 33-34.

406 A. L. Oppenheim, "Belshazzar," in The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, 1:379-80.

407 Young, p. 165.

408 C. F. Keil, Biblical Commentary on the Book of Daniel, p. 285.

409 Josephus is also the source of the story that Daniel built a building at Ecbatana in Media in which later the kings of Media, Persia and Parthis were buried. Cf. Montgomery's discussion on the tomb of Daniel at Susa, and the tradition that Daniel built a tower at Ecbatana (The Book of Daniel, pp. 10-11, 325).

J. A. Montgomery, The Book of Daniel, p. 325. Cf. Josephus, The Works of Flavius Josephus, p. 320.

410 Keil, p. 285.

411 Montgomery, pp. 325-26.

412 S. R. Driver, The Book of Daniel, p. 111.

413 Montgomery, p. 327.

414 Cf. M. F. Unger, Unger's Bible Dictionary, pp. 1022-23.

415 Young, p. 178.

416 For a brief history of Medo-Persia, see Walvoord, The Nations in Prophecy, pp. 70 ff.

417 Keil, p. 290.

418 Ibid

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