

Chapter 8

“The Ram, the He-Goat, and the Little Horn”

Summary

- Prophecies about Persia and Greece and Antiochus Epiphanes
- Around 551 B.C., two years after Chapter 7 and about eleven before Chapter 5

Outline

- I. Setting for the vision - vs. 1-2
- II. The Ram and He-Goat - vs. 3-8
- III. The Little Horn - vs. 9-14
- IV. Interpreting the vision - vs. 15-28
 - A. Introduction to Gabriel - vs. 16-18
 - B. Gabriel’s message - vs. 19-26
- V. Daniel’s reaction - vs. 27

Notes

- The events that Daniel prophesies of in this chapter are 200-400 years in the future
- vs. 7 - *cholera* means “great anger”
- vs. 13-14 - the *saints* here are probably angels
- vs. 15-15 - first appearance of the angel Gabriel
- vs. 16 - the “man” speaking is thought by some to be Christ.

The Ram - Medo-Persia

- Described in vs. 3-4, 6-7, 20
- vs. 3, 20 - two horns represent the alliance of the Medes and Persians
- vs. 3 - the bigger horn represent that the Persians became the strongest in the alliance
- vs. 4 - the power and territorial gains of the Persians
- vs. 6-7 - Persia is defeated after and epic struggle against Greece

The He-Goat - Greece

- Described in vs. 5-8, 22
- vs. 5, 21 - the “notable horn” is Alexander the Great
- vs. 5 - “touched not the ground” - the swiftness of Alexander’s campaigns
- vs. 6-7 - Alexander conquers Persia in 331 B.C.
- vs. 8 - Alexander dies suddenly in 323 B.C. at age 32
- vs. 8, 22 - his empire is split between his four generals: Cassander in Greece, Lysimachus in Asia Minor, Seleucus in Syria, and Ptolemy in Egypt
- vs. 22 - “not in his power” - their power was inherited by Alexander

The Little Horn - Antiochus Epiphanes

- Described in vs. 9-14, 23-25
- vs. 9, 23 - most conservative scholars agree that the Little Horn is historically fulfilled in the Seleucid king Antiochus IV
 - Ruled from 175-164 B.C.
 - Took the name *Epiphanes* meaning “god made manifest”
 - Tried to force the Jews to abandon their religion and accept Greek culture
 - “For the king had sent letters by messengers unto Jerusalem and the cities of Juda that they should follow the strange laws of the land, And forbid burnt offerings, and sacrifice, and drink offerings, in the temple; and that they should profane the sabbaths and festival days: And pollute the sanctuary and holy people: Set up altars, and groves, and chapels of idols, and sacrifice swine’s flesh, and unclean beasts: That they should also leave their children uncircumcised, and make their souls abominable with all manner of uncleanness and profanation: To the end they might forget the law, and change all the ordinances. And whosoever would not do according to the commandment of the king, he said, he should die.” - I Maccabees 1:44-50
 - The Maccabees revolted against him and his policies
- vs. 10 - probably refers to Antiochus’ making himself as a god
- vs. 11. 25 - “prince of the host” and “Prince of princes” is God
- vs. 11 - in 167 B.C., when he sacked Jerusalem and tried to stop Judaism
 - “Not long after this the king sent an old man of Athens to compel the Jews to depart from the laws of their fathers, and not to live after the laws of God: And to pollute also the temple in Jerusalem, and to call it the temple of Jupiter Olympius; and that in Garizim, of Jupiter the Defender of strangers, as they did desire that dwelt in the place.” - II Maccabees 6:1-2
 - “...they set up the abomination of desolation upon the altar, and builded idol altars throughout the cities of Juda on every side;” - II Maccabees 6:54
- vs. 12 - Antiochus seems to win, for a time...
- vs. 13-14 - Antiochus would dominate for 2,300 days. If taken as literal days this is 6.39 years. The slaying of the last legitimate High Priest, Onias III, took place in 171 B.C., about seven years before Antiochus’ death.
- vs. 24 - “not by his own power” - he inherited his power, or possibly Satanic power
- vs. 24 - “broken without hand” - Antiochus died suddenly of disease in 164 B.C.

The Little Horn - The Antichrist???

- Although historically we see the Little Horn as Antiochus Epiphanes, there are many parallels to the Antichrist
- Both are referred to as “Little Horns” - Daniel 7:8, 8:9
- Both persecute and seek to annihilate God’s people - Daniel 7:21, 8:25
- Both blaspheme and claim deity - Daniel 7:8, 8:25, Revelation 13:6
- Both use peace as a weapon - Daniel 8:25, 9:27
- Both desecrate the Temple - Daniel 8:13, Matthew 24:15
- Both are not defeated by man - Daniel 8:25, Revelation 19:11-21
- Both have dominion over Israel for seven years
- Both heavily persecuted God’s people for about 3 1/2 years