

# God Holds the Future - Daniel Chapter 08

## SLIDE 2 - God is already at work in the future - he is not limited by space or time

- Daniel 8 the same kingdoms as Dan 2 & 7, but there's no Babylon... the reason: he is seeing the future
- In the vision he is in Susa, a city of Persia, the kingdom that will conquer Babylon 11 years from now
- The vision he is seeing will stretch nearly 400 years into the future
- God is not limited by space (in Susa while in Babylon) or time — HE HOLDS THE FUTURE

## SLIDE 3 → Daniel interacts with the vision (saw it, sought to understand it, did not understand it)

- BEGINNING (2) **I saw a vision**
- AFTER SEEING THE VISION (15) When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, **I sought to understand it**
  - (16) "**Gabriel, make this man understand the vision.**"
- AT THE END (27) I was appalled by the vision and **did not understand it**
  - **Appalled** - "desolated." emotionally & mentally devastated — stunned, horrified, overwhelmed.

## Interpreting Bible Prophecy (back of the bulletin - a simple list of principles to interpret scripture)

Principles - **Genre** - apocalyptic, prophetic/historic -- **Clear interpret unclear** - Scripture interprets Scripture.

## Combining The VISION vs 3-14 -- and Gabriel's interpretation vs 20-26

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

**SLIDE 5 Interpretation** (20) As for the ram that you saw with the two horns, **these are the kings of Media and Persia.**

- Scripture interprets scripture **CLEAR** *The angel names the empire. The uneven horns reflect Persia's eventual dominance over Media. Persia expanded west, north, and south as stated. Matches history.*

**SLIDE 6 The Male Goat with a conspicuous horn** (5) As I was considering, behold, a male goat came from the west across the face of the whole earth, without touching the ground. And the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes. (6) He came to the ram with the two horns, which I had seen standing on the bank of the canal, and he ran at him in his powerful wrath. (7) I saw him come close to the ram, and he was enraged against him and struck the ram and broke his two horns. **And the ram had no power** to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled on him. And there was **no one who could rescue the ram** from his power. (8) Then **the goat became exceedingly great,**

**SLIDE 7 Interpretation** (21) **And the goat is the king of Greece.** And the great horn between his eyes is **the first king.**

- Scripture interprets scripture → *Greece.....In humility seek help* → *first king is Alexander the Great.... 'without touching the ground' = speed of his conquest-defeated Persia in 3-4 years. Matches history.*

**SLIDE 8 The Four Horns** 8(b) but when he was strong, the great horn was broken, and instead of it there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven.

**SLIDE 9 Interpretation** (22) As for the horn that was broken, in place of which four others arose, four kingdoms shall arise from his nation, but not with his power.

- **SLIDE 10** Still talking about Greece - history a good match this... After Alexander's sudden death at 32, his empire was divided between four generals: Cassander, Lysimachus, Seleucus, Ptolemy
- *None of these four matched Alexander's power. Matches history.*

## The Little Horn

**SLIDE 11** (9) Out of one of them came a little horn, which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward **the glorious land**. (10) It grew great, even to the host of heaven. And some of the host and some of the stars it threw down to the ground and trampled on them. (11) It became great, even as great as the Prince of the host. And the regular burnt offering was taken away from him, and the place of his sanctuary was overthrown. **SLIDE 12** (12) And a host will be given over to it together with the regular burnt offering because of transgression, and it will throw truth to the ground, and it will act and prosper. (13) Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to the one who spoke, "For how long is the vision concerning the regular burnt offering, the transgression that makes desolate, and the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled underfoot?" (14) And he said to me, "For 2,300 evenings and mornings. Then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state."

**SLIDE 13 Interpretation** (23) **And at the latter end of their kingdom**, when the transgressors have reached their limit, a king of bold face, one who understands riddles, shall arise. **SLIDE 14** (24) His power shall be great—but not by his own power; and he shall cause fearful destruction and shall succeed in what he does, and destroy mighty men and the people who are the saints. (25) By his cunning he shall make deceit prosper under his hand, and in his own mind he shall become great. Without warning he shall destroy many. And he shall even rise up against the Prince of princes, and he shall be broken—but by no human hand.

## How do we interpret this little horn? - not as clear as Media Persia, or Greece - but actions described

So we look to the biblical account alongside historical evidence. (much like the others)

History (Book of Maccabees and Josephus describe the reign of this Little Horn)

### **SLIDE 15 a little horn from one of the horns**

- Timewise → it Rose up from one of the 4 horns...Antiochus iv Epiphanes arose from Seleucid
- He attacked 'the glorious land' — Israel
- He stopped the temple sacrifices (a matter of history 168–165 BC)
- He desecrated the sanctuary (set up an altar to Zeus, sacrificed a pig)
- He persecuted the saints (killed woman and their children if circumcised, burned torah)
- He exalted himself — even calling himself Epiphanes, '**God Manifest**'
- He prospered for a while...
- He died suddenly and unexpectedly — not in battle, not by a human hand

The 2,300 evenings and mornings (v. 14) corresponds to the roughly 6-year period of desecration, ending with the revolt of Judas Maccabeus and dedication of the temple (celebrated as Hanukkah - *feast of dedication*).

**SLIDE 16** (26) The vision of the evenings and the mornings that has been told is true, **but seal up the vision**, for it refers to many days from now." (it would be 384 yrs before the temple would be restored)

### Here is what we know

- 1) God knows the future
- 2) God REVEALS some things about the future CLEARLY
- 3) God SEALS some things for his purpose, and if it is sealed it will not be fully known for a time

*When we consider bible prophecy or end times we should consider this.*

Because the Little Horn is not as clear as the description of ram and goat there is debate as to who it is

**Is it just talking about (a) Antiochus (b) a future antichrist** (many believe) or **(c) a telescoping prophecy**

- **Is it Antiochus?** (there is much historical evidence) **happened 384 years after this vision**

- **Is it Titus in 70AD was 236 years after than?** → Mat 24:15-16 Jesus said "So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), (16) then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.
- **Is it talking about a future antichrist?** - many believe this

## The Latter End

**One reason many believe it is a future antichrist...is the use of the words "time of the end" "the latter end" "many days from now" -- let's examine that**

Principle: Scripture interprets Scripture, 'latter days,' 'time of the end,' and 'last days' **do not always refer** to the final years of world history. Context determines what 'end' is in view.

### **OTHER EXAMPLES WHERE LAST DAYS DOES NOT MEAN LAST DAYS AS WE THINK**

**SLIDE 17** Dan 2:28 But there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days.

- **The latter days of this dream is actually days in the near future of Babylon, Media Persia, Greece and Rome - not the last days as we think of them**

**SLIDE 18** Acts 2:17 'In the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh...'

- **He was describing the last days as something that was happening right at that moment**

Heb 1:1-2 In these last days he has spoken to us by his Son...

- **The last days is here speaking of the end of the old covenant and the bringing in of a new one**

## Let's look at the verbiage in Daniel

**SLIDE 19** Dan 8:16-17 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.**"

- **But what he describes is near future history (Medes/Persians, Greeks, 4 generals, Antiochus**

**SLIDE 20** Dan 8:19 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.

- **What is the indignation? -- God's because of transgression** Dan 8:12 And a host will be given over to it together with the regular burnt offering **because of transgression**,

**Remember he asked how long this would last - 2300 evenings and mornings**

Dan 8:26 The vision of the evenings and the mornings that has been told is true, but **seal up the vision, for it refers to many days from now.**"

(again this was nearly 400 years later - so not last days as you might think)

**SLIDE 21** Dan 8:22-23 As for the horn that was broken, in place of which four others arose, four kingdoms shall arise from his nation, but not with his power. (23) And at **the latter end of their kingdom**, when the transgressors have reached their limit, a king of bold face, one who understands riddles, shall arise.

- **This is the latter end of the four kingdoms not the last days as we typically think of them**

## Personal reflection

**SLIDE 22** Jas 3:1 Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.

Personally: as I have grown older, I have decided to stand strongly on things that Scripture makes clear, and be more humble and less dogmatic where it is less clear.

- we can be certain about the ram, the goat, **(scripture interprets scripture)**
- pretty confident about the four horns **(based in history that reflects the biblical narrative)**

- ...and **maybe** less dogmatic about the little horn which is where debate lives — and good men of God differ...and frankly this is where he told him to SEAL it up

Conclusion

### **God Knows the Future**

**There are things clearly revealed...where there is certainty we can be certain**

**There are things that are sealed...we cannot be as certain here**

- **Daniel saw the vision**
- **Wanted understanding of the vision**
- **But still did not understand the vision in the end**

### **Now What? - we must be about the business of the LORD**

**SLIDE 23** (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.

**SLIDE 24** Act 1:6-11 So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" (7) He said to them, "**It is not for you to know times or seasons** that the Father has fixed by his own authority. (8) But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and **you will be my witnesses** in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

- Then he was taken up to heaven
- Men of Galilee why do you stand gazing into heaven, he will come again
- You can almost hear him saying -- **Rise and be about the King's Business**