

Daniel 8:15-27 – The Ram and the Goat Interpreted

In chapter 8, Daniel had a follow-up vision to his vision of chapter 7. In chapter 7, Daniel saw four beasts rising from the sea. In chapter 8, Daniel saw a ram with two horns which was then trampled by a male goat with a horn. The ram represented Medo-Persia. The male goat represented Greece. The horn on the male goat was Alexander the Great. The goat's horn was broken and from it came four horns. The four horns represented the four major Greek empires that arose after Alexander's death. Out of one of those four kingdoms arose a "little" horn who, most believe, was Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Once Daniel had the vision, he was given an interpretation of the vision.

Read Daniel 8:15-19.

In verse 15, what did Daniel do after he saw the vision? Who was the one having the appearance of a man? (8:15)

In verse 16, where did the voice of a man come from? Given the location of the voice, was it the voice of a human or the voice of an angel or God manifested in a man's voice? What did the voice say? Who is Gabriel? See Daniel 9:20-21 and Luke 1:19, 26. E. J. Young pointed out that Daniel is the only Old Testament book that assigns names to angels. (8:16)

In verse 17, what did Daniel do when Gabriel approached him? What did Gabriel say to Daniel in verse 17? When people hear "the time of the end", their minds usually go to "the end times". In the context of the vision and the little horn, what does "the time of the end" refer to? E. J. Young suggests that it is the end of the time before the first coming of Christ. Dale Ralph Davis suggests that it is related to the question in verse 13, "How long". (8:17)

In verse 18, how did Daniel respond to Gabriel's statement? Why do you think Daniel responded in this way? (8:18)

After Gabriel touched Daniel and made him stand up, what did Gabriel say to Daniel in verse 19? Verse 17 had "the time of the end". Verse 19 had "the latter end of the indignation" and "the appointed time of the end". Do all three phrases refer to the same time period? We should remember that the vision in chapter 8 only covered the empires of Medo-Persia and Greece. Some people want to push the vision to include a time period after the Greek empire. (8:19)

Read Daniel 8:20-27.

From verse 20, what did the ram with the two horns represent? From verse 21, what did the male goat represent? What did the horn of the goat represent? (8:20-21)

In verse 22, what was the meaning of the goat's horn being broken and four other horns arising? (8:22)

Verse 23 corresponds to the little horn that arose from one of the four horns of verse 22. When did the little horn arise? (8:23)

In verses 23-25, how was the little horn described? What did the little horn do? (8:23-25)

According to history, Antiochus IV Epiphanes was a younger son of Antiochus III (the Great). When his father died, his older brother, Seleucus IV Philopator ruled. Seleucus was assassinated. The heir was too young to rule, so Antiochus IV Epiphanes navigated his way into power. "Epiphanes" was a name that Antiochus IV gave to himself. Antiochus IV was claiming to be god (Zeus) manifest/revealed. In verse 25, ESV has "in his own mind he shall become great". NASB has "he will make himself great in his own mind". NIV has "he will consider himself superior". NKJV has "he shall exalt himself in his heart". I think calling himself "Epiphanes" would fit this text. (8:25)

Antiochus IV Epiphanes was responsible for the deaths of many people, including Jews. Who is the Prince of princes? Who finally stopped the little horn? (8:25)

In verse 26, the angel declared that the vision of the evenings and mornings was true. What was Daniel told to do? If the vision of the little horn was about Antiochus IV Epiphanes, then the fulfillment was more than 360 years away. (8:26)

In verse 27, how did Daniel react to the vision? Why did the vision take such a toll on Daniel? (8:27)