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C1235 – October 17, 2012 – Daniel 8:1-27
The Ram & the He-Goat

If you would turn with me tonight to Daniel 8. I want to begin by making several observations. First of all, Daniel 8 returns to the Hebrew language. Daniel 1 was in Hebrew but Daniel 2-7 was in Aramaic and now Daniel 8-12 returns to Hebrew. Why did Daniel employ two tongues in one book? To address different audiences. The Hebrew portions are primarily written to the Jews while the Aramaic portions are primarily written to the Gentiles. So far we've spent most of our time in the portion written to Gentiles. It includes the metal statue, the fiery furnace, the great tree, the handwriting on the wall, the lion's den and the four beasts. Those dreams, events and visions are primarily written to outline the course of Gentile kingdoms and warn Gentiles against becoming arrogant in their rule. As a secondary purpose they give hope to faithful Jews living under Gentile rule by the examples of Daniel, Azariah, Hananiah and Mishael. Tonight we're moving into the Hebrew section of Daniel 8-12 and the visions and events here will relate primarily to the lives of the Jews who live in the times of the Gentiles and what will happen if they capitulate to pagan culture. So what we're going to find in these chapters is detailed predictions about the Jews experience under the sovereignty of the four Gentile kingdoms.

Secondly, we have looked at the broad sketch of the times of the Gentiles from two points of view, from the human view point in Daniel 2, Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the metal statue depicting four forms of the kingdom of man; Babylon the head of gold, Medo-Persia the breast and arms of silver, Greece the waist and thighs of bronze and Rome which is more complex, it's a divided kingdom, the ancient phase depicted by the legs of iron signifying strength and the future phase depicted by the feet and ten toes partly of iron and partly of clay signifying it's brittle. In any case, Daniel 2 portrays them as four illustrious kingdoms of man.

In Daniel 7 we are given the same four kingdoms but from the divine view point in Daniel's vision of the four beasts; Babylon the winged lion, Medo-Persia the lopsided bear, Greece the four-winged, four headed leopard and Rome again in two phases, the ancient phase signified by the dreadful terrifying beast with iron teeth and bronze claws, the future phase signified by the ten-horns and the little horn growing up, uprooting three of the ten. In Daniel 7 the kingdoms are portrayed as four devouring, inhumane kingdoms of man.

Third, these kingdoms are successive kingdoms, one rises and falls, then another rises and falls, they are not contemporaneous kingdoms and the dates of those kingdoms show the succession; Babylon reigned from 605-539BC, Medo-Persia reigned from 539-331BC, Greece reigned from 331-63BC, the ancient phase of Rome reigned from 63BC-AD476 in the west and from 63BC –AD1453 in the east, the future phase of Rome in the condition described as ten contemporaneous kings is yet future. Now that's my interpretation of the ten king stage. It seems to imply some kind of gap of time between ancient Rome and future Rome. However, my understanding is that Rome is really still with us at this very time, Rome in it's political, military and economic aspects, it's simply that it has not materialized in a ten king confederation. Dr Pentecost held that when ancient Rome fell it immediately went into the ten king division and he mentions nations like Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, Belgium, Holland and Great Britain as continuations of the political power that was once centralized in united Rome.ⁱ I agree that those nations are continuations of the political power of Rome but I disagree that those are what is meant by the ten king divisions. And the reason I disagree is because all the other numbers in the book of Daniel are literal, the seven periods of time in Daniel 4 refer to seven literal periods of time, the three ribs in the bears mouth in Daniel 7 refer to three literal kingdoms conquered, the four heads of the leopard in Daniel 7 refer to the four literal divisions of Alexander's kingdom after his death, the one little horn in Daniel 7 refers to one literal king. So I take it when it says the ten horns are ten kings that the ten horns are ten literal kings. Therefore when ancient Rome fell the political, economic and military aspects continued in other nations that resulted from the breakup of the united Roman Empire, but they will eventually come together in a ten king stage that will ultimately

be ruled by an eleventh king that rises up among them and takes control of the whole world. At that time the world will say, Rome has been re-united.

Fourth, it is during that final stage of the fourth kingdom or Rome that the times of the Gentiles will come to an end and a fifth kingdom depicted by the stone cut out without hands and as by the Son of Man will come upon earth. It's at that time that the Jews will be restored to their ancient promises made to Abraham in the covenant. Their time of discipline will have reached its purpose and the nation will repent and be saved, taken into the blessings and glories of the kingdom.

However, fifth, to get to the fifth kingdom the nation Israel has to go through these four Gentile kingdoms. And in Daniel 2-7 these four kingdoms have been revealed with very broad strokes. In Daniel 8-12 the revelation is given in very detailed strokes. In other words we're going to look at precise details prophesied about Jewish life inside these four kingdoms so they will know what to expect and how to live as they see the plan of God unfold. So if I can make a suggestion, whenever we go into the details and you start to get overwhelmed, just back off and return to the theme of the four kingdoms we saw in Daniel 2 and 7, then come back into the details of the particular kingdom we're looking at. In the end you're taking God's class on world history, His theological interpretation of history and this gives you tools to interpret history theologically. Too often we just think of history as a pile of dates or we get our eyes focused on certain events and their causes and we fail to interpret history theologically. And it's this ability God wants us to develop by studying His curriculum on world history. So if you're a home schooler or a Christian educator or you write Christian curriculum, or you just want to think like God, it's just a suggestion from a Bible student, but the curriculum needs to center around the milestones in Scripture and from there train yourself or students how to interpret history theologically because history is not marbles, history is taking a very definite course under the providential plan of God.

So we're looking at the times of the Gentiles, the period beginning when the Davidic throne was left vacant and which will end when the Davidic throne is filled. Tonight we are going to move in and take a closer look at Medo-Persia and Greece, the second and third Gentile kingdoms and the question, how are the Jewish people going to fair under these two kingdoms, particularly

Greece? We learn by way of symbols. Daniel 8 is apocalyptic literature which is highly symbolic but there are angelic interpreters so we're not left to our imagination. And further, these things have been fulfilled so we are in a much better position even than Daniel to understand the symbols, although there are aspects of the vision that foreshadow things to come and that is a definite challenge

In Daniel 8:1 we get the timing, **In the third year of the reign of Belshazzar the king a vision appeared to me, Daniel, subsequent to the one which appeared to me previously.** The year was 551BC; that is **the third year of the reign of Belshazzar.** Remember Belshazzar is one of the kings of Babylon. He co-ruled with his father Nabonidus from 553-539BC. He was the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar who failed to learn the theology lesson his grandfather taught him, namely, the lesson of Daniel 4 that it is God who gives kings their kingdoms and it is God who can just as easily take them away. Nebuchadnezzar learned that theology lesson very painfully when he was struck with a condition known as therianthropy where you think you're an animal and you go around on all fours acting like an animal. And when he looked up and recognized God was sovereign over his kingdom then God restored his splendor and reason. He then taught that theology lesson of humility to his grandson Belshazzar but he didn't accept the lesson and so one night in 539BC when Darius the Mede and his armies were outside surrounding the city of Babylon he had a great feast for his nobles, wives and concubines and when he got drunk he sent for the gold and silver vessels from the Temple in Jerusalem. They started praising the gods of gold and silver in a direct arrogant assault against the God of Israel. It was at that time that the handwriting on the wall appeared, the days of your kingdom have been numbered, you Belshazzar have been weighed and found wanting, your kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and the Persians. At that time Darius and his armies were already within the city, they went straight to the banquet hall, slew Belshazzar and his nobles and took the city without a battle. That kingdom change occurred in 539BC but Daniel 8 occurred twelve years earlier in 551BC. So in the year 551BC Daniel says in verse 1, **a vision appeared to me...subsequent to the one which appeared to me previously.** The previous vision was the four beasts in Daniel 7 and that vision appeared in 553BC. So the vision of this chapter occurs subsequent to that one.

Daniel 8:2, **I looked in the vision**, and I take it this occurred in the daytime because there's no mention of being in bed or at night. So he was probably going about his administrative duties (he was probably not high up in the government anymore, he was a lower official). And he says, **while I was looking I was in the citadel of Susa, which is in the province of Elam; and I looked in the vision and I myself was beside the Ulai Canal.**

Now he wasn't actually there, he was there in vision. And apparently he was familiar with this place because he recognized it right away. Having been a high governmental official in Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar he was sent to many kings and kingdoms to carry out governmental affairs. So he recognized **the citadel of Susa...in the province of Elam...beside the Ulai Canal.** Now the **citadel of Susa** was a fortress city located 230 miles east of Babylon and 120 miles north of the Persian Gulf. This is the city that Queen Esther and King Ahasuerus reign from in the book of Esther. That was the kingdom of Persia and actually Persia had a summer palace in Ecbatana to the north and a winter palace in Susa or Shushan to the south. Daniel is standing in Persia at the winter palace of Susa. Now this is in Persia and the Persians are who? They're Iranian. The modern Iranians refer to themselves as the Persians. And the ancient Persians were known for their globalist mentality, they wanted to conquer and conquer and conquer and what is the mentality of the modern Persians? Same globalist mentality, they want to conquer the world and the deception Satan has them under today is Islam, but the same mentality is being exerted through Islam that was exerted in the ancient Persia - conquer the world. So very little has changed among these people and all I'm doing is showing you how to interpret history theologically. You can fully understand Ahmadinejad and the Iranian regime if you understand the ancient mentality of this people.

Alright, Daniel is there in vision, standing beside the **Ulai Canal**; this was a 900 foot wide man- made canal that ran along the NE side of the city. And what did Daniel see from there? Verse 3, **Then I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a ram which had two horns was standing in front of the canal.** Drop down to verse 20 to see who the **ram with two horns** represents. "The ram which you saw with the two horns represents the kings of Media and Persia. So the ram has two horns, and one represents Media and the other Persia. And it's interesting that the Persian rulers would wear the head of a ram when they went before their armies into battle. This ram has **two horns** which is typical for a ram, but notice something

atypical. **Now the two horns were long, but one was longer than the other, with the longer one coming up last.** Both of the horns were long signifying they were both powerful, but one of the horns **was longer than the other** signifying it was more powerful than the other and that **longer one came up last** signifying that its rise in history was later. The **longer** horn is Persia because Persia eventually came to dominate Media. In fact, later in history the kingdom was referred to only as the Persian kingdom.ⁱⁱ So the horns are Media and Persia but the longer one is Persia and this kingdom was born later in history. And I suggest to you this corresponds to the lopsided bear in Daniel 7 with the three ribs in its mouth. The bear was lopsided to signify the same thing the unequal horns signify, Persia is stronger than Media. In the end if you put all these significations together you get the full picture of what Daniel saw about these kings and kingdoms to help you learn to interpret history theologically.

Verse 4, **I saw the ram butting westward, northward, and southward, and no other beasts could stand before him nor was there anyone to rescue from his power, but he did as he pleased and magnified himself.** May I suggest Daniel saw **other beasts** in the vision but we are not told what they looked like? We are simply told that they **could not stand before him**. So the Medo-Persian kingdom was very powerful. And you can see the three directions they conquered, **westward, northward, and southward**, they didn't make much progress eastward. **Westward** they conquered Babylonia, Syria and Asia, **northward** they conquered Armenia and the Caspian Sea region, **southward** they conquered Egypt and Ethiopia. In the end they conquered a greater land mass than any other kingdom in history up to that time. Cyrus was like a great conquering bear who marched and conquered and marched and conquered, a slow but certain conquest. And that is the mentality of these people, to conquer and conquer and conquer; they don't care how long it takes.

But notice the end of verse 4, the reason for his undoing, **he did as he pleased and magnified himself**. When this kingdom got to the point that it could do whatever it wanted and no one could do anything about it, it **magnified** itself. That is, it got arrogant. And we've seen this before and we'll see it again, the predominant characteristic of Gentile kingdoms is they get arrogant and say in their heart, "I have built this great kingdom with my own hands." And when they say that then they are not recognizing that God

has given them their kingdom and their rule and they are humiliated. So you can predict verse 5.

While I was observing, behold, a male goat was coming from the west over the surface of the whole earth without touching the ground; and the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes. 6He came up to the ram that had the two horns, which I had seen standing in front of the canal, and rushed at him in his mighty wrath. 7I saw him come beside or at the ram, and he was enraged at him; and he struck the ram and shattered his two horns, and the ram had no strength to withstand him. So he hurled him to the ground and trampled on him, and there was none to rescue the ram from his power. This describes a kingdom shift; Medo-Persia, the ram with two horns, was defeated suddenly by a great power, a male goat with one prominent horn between his eyes. And we don't have to guess what the male goat with one prominent horn is because verse 21 tells us, "The shaggy goat represents the kingdom of Greece, and the large horn that is between his eyes is the first king." So the goat is Greece and the large horn is the first king of Greece, Alexander the Great. Now in many ways you can almost say that the entire male goat is Alexander the Great because he was by far the greatest king of Greece. He is to Greece what Nebuchadnezzar was to Babylon; very incarnation of the kingdom. The text says the male goat is the kingdom of Greece and the large horn between his eyes is Alexander the Great, its first king but I think Alexander is both the male goat and the horn for various reasons.

Observe in verse 5 the **male goat**, this is literally the "buck of the goats," signifying maximum power. And notice he's **coming from the west over the surface of the whole earth without touching the ground**. The **whole earth** would be the Medo-Persian kingdom, (they had conquered the largest land mass in the history of the world) and now this buck goat is coming **from the west**. And it's a fact of history that Alexander the Great came **from the west** because Greece lay to **the west** of Macedonia. And notice he came **without touching the ground**. What does that signify? Extreme speed. And I suggest we are to connect this with the four-winged leopard in Daniel 7 which four wings depict extremely rapid military conquest. In verse 6 **He came up to the ram that had the two horns...and rushed at him in his mighty wrath**. The Greeks were already angry at the Persians because of the nagging tension and quarreling

that had gone on for decades and so Alexander and the Greeks in verse 7 were **enraged** and this hot anger fueled the rapidity of the conquest. Then **he struck the ram and shattered his two horns, and the ram had no strength to withstand him.** But that's not all. Then **he hurled him to the ground and trampled on him.** Alexander took every Persian city and no one could stop him. No army ever defeated Alexander the Great.

Let's look at his background. Alexander's father was Philip of Macedon and you know about Macedonia from the NT. There was a man from Macedonia who Paul saw in a vision who cried out come over here to us; where Philippi and Thessalonica and Berea are all located. Macedonia had previously been conquered by Alexander's father who was also a great conquering warrior. When he died his son Alexander was just 20 years old so he became king at 20. His upbringing is interesting because he had been educated by the famous Greek philosopher Aristotle, so it's no surprise that Alexander was brilliant, and he put that brilliance to work in becoming the world's greatest military strategist. Over and over he defeated armies much larger than his own. He set out on his military conquests at 21 ½ years old from the west, from Macedonia with his sights set on the Persian Empire. In three decisive battles; at Granicus, Issus and Guagamela, Alexander was able to totally devastate the Persian kingdom. In just eleven short years he had utterly defeated all of Persia, even crossing the Indus River into India, and thereby conquering a territory greater than Persia conquered. It's his rapid conquest that is forecast in verses 5, 6 and 7; the rapid conquest that resulted in a shift from the Medo-Persia kingdom to Greece.

But notice verse 8, **Then the buck goat magnified himself exceedingly.** So here we go again - notice verse 4, the end of Medo-Persia was due to self-magnification and the end of Alexander the Great was due to self-magnification. Arrogance is the downfall of Gentile kings and kingdoms. You can see it coming. **But as soon as he was mighty, the large horn was broken; and in its place there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven.** Now **as soon as** indicates the very moment that **he was mighty**, that is, the very moment he had conquered the whole Persian kingdom and **magnified himself.** At that point he **was broken**, meaning he died. History reports that after crossing the Indus River into India and conquering everything from west to east that he returned to Babylon where he contracted a fever and died. He had a short but brilliant

military career. He left Greece at 21 ½ and never returned home, dying at the age of 32 at the height of his power.

Now when Alexander died it was unexpected because he was so young and this left the question as to who would rule his newly acquired empire. Verse 8 answers, **in his place there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven.** These four conspicuous horns that **came up** signify the four generals of Alexander's army who took over his kingdom. And I suggest this corresponds to the four-headed leopard in Daniel 7 and refers to the same four generals; Cassander took Macedonia and Greece, Lysimachus took Thrace and Asia Minor, Seleucus took Syria and most of the East while Ptolemy took Egypt. These four divisions were **toward the four winds of heaven** referring to the four points of the compass.ⁱⁱⁱ You see this interpretation confirmed in verse 22, "The broken horn and the four horns that arose in its place represent four kingdoms which will arise from his nation although not with his power." None of the generals was anything compared to Alexander. He was a unique and conspicuous man.

Then verse 9, **Out of one of them came forth a rather small horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Beautiful Land.** The picture is that you have four horns and out of one of the horns **a rather small horn came up** and became **exceedingly great.** I suggest this **small horn** grew up out of the Seleucid dynasty. He's going to move **south** toward Egypt to challenge Ptolemy and he's going to move **east** into Mesopotamia and Armenia **and** most importantly, **toward the Beautiful Land.** I take it that the **Beautiful Land** is Israel or perhaps even Jerusalem more specifically since the Hebrew word means "glory" and the glory of God was associated with the Temple in Jerusalem, which hints at what he's going to do. So we have here one of the Seleucid kings, the eighth Seleucid king and he is known as Antiochus IV, surnamed Epiphanes which means "The Illustrious".

Antiochus Epiphanes we'll see again in more detail in Daniel 11 so he's very important historical figure. He was a vile man whose career foreshadows the career of the anti-Christ. This is the man whose life is paralleled in many respects by the anti-Christ. And we are supposed to see this connection because Antiochus is symbolized in Daniel 8 by a **small horn** whereas the anti-Christ is symbolized in Daniel 7 by a "little horn." The connection is

apparent but Antiochus and anti-Christ are not one and the same because the **small horn** arises out of one of the four horns of Greece but the little horn arises among the ten horns of future Rome. So they come out of two different kingdoms and are therefore not the same person but they are similar. Also there are things here predicted that were not fulfilled in Antiochus and so must look beyond Antiochus to a greater than Antiochus, namely the anti-Christ. I'd suggest that the way to express this is to say Antiochus foreshadows the anti-Christ.

Now observe in verse 9 the first foreshadowing, Antiochus begins small but then grows exceedingly great. The anti-Christ does the same thing doesn't he? We saw in Daniel 7 that he started off insignificant but grew greater than all ten and even subdued three of the ten.

So let's see in verse 9 how Antiochus grows, he inherits his empire but he expands his empire toward Ptolemy in the **south**, toward Mesopotamia and Armenia in the east and **toward the Beautiful Land**, the land of Israel. Now I suggest this is divine discipline on the Jews because he instituted a program and many of them rebelled at first but then they started jumping on the bandwagon and God therefore disciplined them through this Antiochus. Notice verse 10, **It [Antiochus IV] grew up to the host of heaven and caused some of the host and some of the stars to fall to the earth, and it trampled them down. 11It even magnified itself to be equal with the Commander of the host; and it removed the regular sacrifice from Him, and the place of His sanctuary was thrown down. 12And on account of transgression the host will be given over to the horn along with the regular sacrifice; and it will fling truth to the ground and perform its will and prosper. 13Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to that particular one who was speaking, "how long will the vision about the regular sacrifice apply, while the transgression causes horror, so as to allow both the holy place and the host to be trampled?" 14He said to me, "for 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the holy place will be properly restored."** Now these events I take occur within the **2,300** day period mentioned there in verse 14, a literal **2,300** days. These days began by back calculation on Sept 6, 171BC and ended on Dec 25, 165BC. We know the Dec 25, 165 date was the date **the holy place** was **properly restored**. The Sept 6, 171 date we don't know but is calculated by adding **2,300** days to the Dec

25, 165 date. Now I would suggest that what you see in verse 10 is that Antiochus grew up to take power over the **host of heaven** who signify the Jews, he took control of the Jews territory and notice, he **caused some of the host and some of the stars to fall to the earth**. Two groups of Jews, **some of the host** refers to your average Jewish person, some of them fell away and **some of the stars** refer to some of the Jewish leadership, those among the priests who administered the Temple, including the high priest. So we have a segment of the nation he caused to **fall**. Fall to what? Fall to his indoctrination program. Antiochus Epiphanes, like his father, was a very enterprising and ambitious ruler. His primary aim was to expand and unify his empire by spreading Greek civilization and culture; that way everybody thought the same and lived the same and that would bring unity. Alexander the Great had started this idea as a way to unify his kingdom. But when Antiochus tried this with the Jews that's when he ran into opposition because many Jews were trying to maintain Jewish civilization and culture. So he got bent at the Jews and started to rule them with a heavy fist. And so some of the Jews decided it might be best to just go along with Antiochus' program. That this occurred as a matter of history is recorded in 2 Maccabees 4:7;

But when Seleucus died, and Antiochus, who was called Epiphanes, succeeded to the kingdom, ⁸Jason the brother of Onias supplanted his brother in the high-priesthood, promising in a petition to the king three hundred and threescore talents of silver, ⁹besides eighty talents from another fund; in addition to which he undertook to pay a hundred and fifty more, if he was commissioned to set up a gymnasium and ephebeum (*a stadium*) and to register the Jerusalemites as citizens of Antioch. ¹⁰And when the king had given his assent, Jason at once exercised his influence in order to bring over his fellowcountrymen to Greek ways of life....and seeking to overthrow the lawful modes of life, he introduced new customs forbidden by the law...And to such a height did the passion for Greek fashions rise, and the influx of foreign customs...that the priests were no longer interested in the services of the altar, but despising the sanctuary, and neglecting the sacrifices, ¹⁵they hurried to take part in the unlawful displays...thus setting at naught what their fathers honoured and esteeming the glories of the Greeks above all else. ¹⁶Hence sore distress befell them; the very men for whose customs they were so keen and whom they desired to be like in every detail, became their foes and punished them. ¹⁷For it is no light matter to act impiously against the laws of God; time will show that.^{iv}

So verse 10 describes what we just read in 2 Maccabees, Antiochus drawing aside many Jews into his Hellenization scheme but it backfiring and many Jews being **trampled**. And in the same way will not the future anti-Christ draw aside many Jews into his scheme and then turn around and trample them for a time, times and half a time? That's the foreshadowing I mentioned before. You'll see it time and time again between these two men. To give one example of this trampling down I quote 1 Maccabees 1:29-32,

the kingⁿ sent a chief collector of tribute to the cities of Judah; and he came to Jerusalem with a great host. ³⁰And he spoke unto them peaceful words in subtlety, so that they had confidence in him; but he fell upon the city suddenly, and smote it with a grievous stroke, and destroyed much people in Israel. ³¹And he took ^othe spoils of the city^o, and burned it with fire, and pulled down the houses thereof and the walls thereof^p round about. ³²And they led captive the women and the children, and ^qtook possession of^q the cattle.^v

Such were the subtle and of Antiochus against the Jews, and will not the anti-Christ use such subtle and deceptive devices against them once more in the future?

Now verse 11, **It even magnified itself to be equal with the Commander of the host.** The **Commander of the host** I take it is God, He is the **Commander of the Jews**. So Antiochus would exalt himself equal to God. But isn't that what the anti-Christ will do in the future? Of course. Continuing verse 11, **and it removed the regular sacrifice from Him, and the place of His sanctuary was thrown down.** Antiochus had an abomination of desolation set up on the altar in the Temple. As 1 Maccabees 1:54 reports,

And on the fifteenth^r days of Chislew in the one hundred and forty-fifth^t year they set up upon the altar an 'abomination of desolation', and in the cities of Judah on every side they established high-places; ^{vi}

And is this not a foreshadowing of the abomination of desolation that Daniel will speak of as being set up by the Antichrist in Daniel 9 and which Jesus mentioned as yet future in Matt 24:15? Of course, Antiochus foreshadows

anti-Christ. If we were to turn to 1 Maccabees 6:7 we would see that the abomination of desolation was something like an image that was set up on the altar and this the Jews pulled down at the end of the 2,300 days.

So Antiochus, like anti-Christ, will start off insignificant but grow to great power, deceive many Jews such that they will follow him to their destruction and will set up an abomination of desolation in the temple.

Verse 12, **And on account of transgression the host will be given over to the horn along with the regular sacrifice;** You see the **transgression of the host** refers to the transgression of the Jews who follow and push Antiochus' Hellenization program and it's on account of that the Jews are **given over to him along with the regular sacrifice**. In other words, this period of 2,300 days is divine discipline for abandoning the Law of God given by Moses. The strange thing is the end of verse 12, **and it will fling truth to the ground and perform its will and prosper**. You would expect that to say "and be broken" because when Medo-Persia and Alexander magnified themselves as Antiochus did, their power was broken, but it says Antiochus **will prosper**. I suggest the reasons are two-fold; first, because many Jews rejected the Law of Moses and adopted Greek culture and customs. Therefore it is divine discipline. Second, because Antiochus and his career would be foreshadowing anti-Christ and his career so that in the future Jews would take heed and not be taken in by anti-Christ's subtle devices.

In verse 13 two angels are introduced, **a holy one speaking to another holy one** and you might expect the question asked there to have come from Daniel, "**How long...?**" But I suspect that Daniel was too shocked and horrified to say anything, so an angel prompts with the question. And the answer is **2,300** days, that would begin on Sept 6, 171BC and extend until Dec 25, 165BC, on that day the altar was properly restored and in memory of that the Jews celebrate Hanukkah, the Feast of Lights, and that's why Jews say Happy Hanukkah in December and not Merry Christmas.

In verse 15 Daniel wants to understand the vision that I just explained to you but it was far beyond his capacity to understand as you see from the end of verse 27, **Then I, Daniel, was exhausted and sick for days. Then I got up again and carried on the king's business; but I was astounded at**

the vision, and there was none to explain it.” Or better translated, there was none to make me understand. Despite Gabriel’s attempt to explain it to Daniel, Daniel still didn’t understand.

Alright, summarizing Daniel’s vision. While still serving in Babylon Daniel found himself by vision in the city of Susa which became the winter capital of the Persian Empire. As he stood by the Ulai Canal he saw a ram with two horns signifying Media and Persia, both horns were long but one was longer than the other, this longer horn signifies Persia, the longer one came up last signifying that Persia would rise to power after Media. This kingdom conquered toward the west, the north and the south, extending its empire to heretofore unseen breadth. When the conquering was done the kingdom became arrogant and in turn God sovereignly disposed of that kingdom. The means was a buck goat signifying Greece who came from Macedonia so rapidly its feet did not even touch the ground; it had a prominent horn between his eyes standing for Alexander the Great. In his anger against the Persians Alexander broke both horns of Medo-Persia signifying utter destruction. He then proceeded to punish the Persian Empire and extend his empire all the way to India. Finally he returned to Babylon where he magnified himself and was suddenly broken, signifying his early death. Four horns grew up in place of the one signifying the four-fold division of the Greek empire to his four generals, Cassander, Lysimachus, Seleucus and Ptolemy. A little horn grew up from one of the four, namely the Seleucid dynasty, and made himself great, this is Antiochus IV, also called Epiphanes, “The Illustrious.” He forced Hellenization on the Jews, some of whom gladly adopted Hellenization and many Jews following with them. But because of this they were sorely punished by Antiochus. He trampled the Jews, massacring thousands; he also had a pig slaughtered on the altar and set up an abomination of desolation. This condition would remain for 2,300 days after which the temple was restored by Judas Maccabeus and his armies who led the revolt against Antiochus.

What can we learn from this chapter? First, God is in control of history. He has a plan and a purpose and He is working it out according to His good pleasure. If you get nothing else out of the Book of Daniel, observe how finely tuned God’s plan is and how perfectly it has come to pass. Second, the Jews were to learn that if they capitulated to pagan culture during the times of the Gentiles they would be severely disciplined by the Gentiles. They should

therefore maintain their loyalty to the Mosaic thought form and culture as closely as possible until Messiah comes. Seeing that Messiah has come and the physical Temple has been destroyed by the Roman armies, the Jews should recognize that the Messiah has already come and in turn believe in Him. Third, even though they would be severely chastised by Antiochus it was only 2,300 days, a limited time period. This shows that their time of discipline is limited. Ultimately Israel will not be chastised into extermination. Though Israel will face extensive punishments including such things as the Holocaust, the reign of the Gentiles it is limited and so is the Jew's discipline by them. At last they will be restored in their kingdom when they recognize their Messiah and turn to belief in Him. Fourth, because Antiochus does not exhaust everything in this chapter, the Jews are to recognize that one greater than Antiochus is coming whose career will be very similar. They should therefore learn the ways of Antiochus so they will be able to detect the ways of anti-Christ and refuse to follow his ways when he appears on the scene.

ⁱ Class notes, J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Books of Daniel and Revelation*, 1988.

ⁱⁱ The Median kingdom was already strong in the 7th century BC as we can see by the fact they allied with Babylon to defeat Nineveh in 612BC. This battle is depicted in great detail in the Book of Nahum.

ⁱⁱⁱ These divisions didn't take place immediately because Alexander died before he could divide up the kingdom in this four-fold way. So it took 22 years of fighting among the generals to divide it into four; when all was said and done.

^{iv} *Apocrypha of the Old Testament*. 2004 (R. H. Charles, Ed.) (2 Mac 4:7–17). Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

^v *Apocrypha of the Old Testament*. 2004 (R. H. Charles, Ed.) (1 Mac 1:29–32). Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

^{vi} *Apocrypha of the Old Testament*. 2004 (R. H. Charles, Ed.) (1 Mac 1:54). Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

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