

The Vision of the Ram and the Goat (8:1-27)

I. THE VISION DESCRIBED (1-14)

A. DATE OF THE VISION...

1. Received by Daniel in the third year of Belshazzar king of Babylon - **Daniel 8:1**
2. This would be about **552 B.C.**, two years later than the vision in **Daniel 7**

B. DETAILS OF THE VISION...

1. In the vision, Daniel saw himself in Shushan (Susa) - **Daniel 8:2**; (western Persia, modern day Iran) He was by the river Ulai
2. He saw a two-horned ram - **Daniel 8:3-4**
 - a. The horns were high, with one higher than the other which came up last
 - b. The ram was pushing westward, northward, and southward
3. He saw a one-horned male goat - **Daniel 8:5**
 - a. Coming suddenly from the west across the surface of the whole earth, not touching the ground
 - b. With a notable horn between his eyes
4. He saw the goat defeat the ram - **Daniel 8:6-7**
 - a. With furious power the goat attacked the ram and broke his two horns
 - b. The ram was unable to withstand the goat, and was trampled
5. The goat became great, but when he became strong... - **Daniel 8:8**
 - a. The large horn was broken
 - b. In its place four notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven
6. He saw a little horn come out of the four with great power - **Daniel 8:9-12**
 - a. Which grew exceedingly great toward the south and east & toward the Glorious Land
 - b. Which grew up to the host of heaven - Casting down and trampling to the ground some of the host, exalting himself as high as the Prince of host.
 - c. By this powerful horn...The daily sacrifices were taken away, the place of His (God's) sanctuary was cast down; an army was given him to oppose the daily sacrifices (because of transgression) -- He did all this and prospered
7. Daniel then heard a conversation between two holy ones - **Daniel 8:13-14**
 - a. One asking: **"How long will the vision be, concerning...the daily sacrifices and the transgression of desolation...the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot?"**
 - b. The reply given to Daniel: **"For two thousand three hundred days" "Then the sanctuary shall be cleansed"**

II. THE VISION INTERPRETED - Daniel 8:15-27;

A. GABRIEL ASSIGNED TO EXPLAIN THE VISION...

1. Daniel was seeking to understand the meaning - **Daniel 8:15-16**;
2. Gabriel speaks to Daniel - **Daniel 8:17-19**
 - a. He approaches Daniel prompting Daniel to fall on his face in fear telling him that **"the vision refers to the time of the end."**
 - b. He stands Daniel on his feet for Daniel had fallen into a deep sleep with his face to the ground to tell him **"what shall happen in the latter time of the indignation; for at the appointed time the end shall be"**

B. GABRIEL EXPLAINS THE VISION...

1. The two-horned ram - **Daniel 8:20** - Depicts the kings of **Media and Persia** - the larger horn may represent Persia's greater influence - (**Daniel 8:3**) the expansion of the Medo-Persian empire illustrated by the ram pushing westward, northward, and southward - **Daniel 8:4**

2. The one-horned male goat - **Daniel 8:21** - Depicts the kingdom of **Greece**; note that it came from the west - **Daniel 8:5** the large horn representing its first king (**Alexander the Great**) the speed of the goat aptly reflects Alexander's conquests - **Daniel 8:5**; Alexander defeated the Persians in three decisive battles - **Daniel 8:6-7**; At Granicus (334 B.C.) At Issus (333 B.C.) At Gaugamela (331 B.C.)

3. The broken horn and four horns that arose in its place - **Daniel 8:22**

a. Alexander died at 33 years of age

b. His empire was divided between his four generals - **Daniel 8:8**; Ptolemy (Egypt) Seleucus I (Syria) Cassander (Macedonia and Greece) Lysimachus (Thrace and Asia Minor)

4. The little horn that became exceedingly great - **Daniel 8:23-25**

a. Some time later a king shall arise

1) When transgressors have reached their fullness (when Israel has fallen back into sin)

2) With mighty power, but not by his own

3) Who shall destroy fearfully, prosper and thrive

4) Who shall destroy the mighty and also the holy people

5) Through cunning he shall cause deceit to prosper

6) He shall magnify himself, and destroy many in their prosperity

7) He shall even rise against the Prince of princes (i.e., God Himself)

8) But he shall be broken without human hand (God shall destroy him)

b. This is most likely **Antiochus Epiphanies**, ruler of Syria (175-163 B.C.)

1) Who imposed Greek culture and deities upon his subjects

2) Who when he conquered Jerusalem:

a) Set up an image in the temple

b) Offered swine flesh upon the altar

c) Encouraged Greek soldiers to commit fornication in the temple

d) Forbade circumcision, keeping the Sabbath, possessing a copy of the Scriptures (Harkrider)

5. The vision of the evenings and mornings - **Daniel 8:26**

a. The number of days the sacrifices will cease, and the temple desolated

b. Maybe a literal period (a little over six years) corresponding to the actual period of time the abomination by Antiochus Epiphanies occurred (171-165 B.C.)

c. Daniel instructed to seal up the vision - For it was to occur "**many days in the future**" i.e., almost four hundred years later.

C. EFFECT ON DANIEL...He fainted and was sick for days - Though he afterward arose and went about the king's business, he was astonished by the vision (but no one understood it) - **Daniel 8:27**

CONCLUSION

1. This vision is probably the easiest to understand of the four visions that Daniel saw...

a. The identity of the ram and goat are clearly given

b. History confirms what is described in this vision - The conflict between Medo-Persia and Greece, the division of the Grecian empire following Alexander's death & the rise of Antiochus Epiphanies and his desecration of the temple in Jerusalem.

2. The purpose of the vision was to prepare the people of Daniel for what was to come...

a. In "**the time of the end**"

b. In "**the latter time of the indignation**"

-- I.e., the persecution that would come upon Israel toward the end of the OT period, during the inter-testamental period (Young)

The remarkable accuracy of this vision has led some to date the book of Daniel after the events of Antiochus Epiphanies. But its accuracy poses no problem for those who accept the inspiration of the Scriptures, and should remind us of God's power to fulfill His Word: "**Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,' "Calling a bird of prey from the east, the man who executes My counsel, from a far country. Indeed I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it."**- Isaiah 46:9-11;