

Intro. To begin this chapter there are 4 significant things to pay attention to.

1. In Ch. 8, Daniel changed languages from Aramaic back to Hebrew. Why?

- Ch. 2-7 spoke of God's dealings with the world's Gentile Empires. They were God's message to the Gentile world of who was really in charge, and who would finally rule. (Aramaic)
- In Ch. 8-12 God focused mainly on Israel, and how the future would go for them as God's people, so here, Daniel wrote about his remaining visions in Hebrew.

2. The progression of Daniel's dreams and visions. (Review bigger picture)

In Ch 2, King Neb was given a troubling dream, and Daniel was given the interpretation by God.

- This dream was about a big beautiful statue where its 4 parts portrayed the 4 world empires of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and then Rome, that would dominate world history.
- In that dream God portrayed those Empires and world history the way man views it, as a large beautiful monument that's rich, strong, and seems to be successful ---
 - showing that mankind views world history as something that's great and worthy to be admired. King Neb. displayed that worldly attitude by building a statue of what he dreamt about, portraying his own greatness, and demanding that he be worshipped.

But in Ch 7 God portrayed those same 4 empires to Daniel in the way God sees man's history, as vicious animals, that would keep humanity in turmoil, cause great destruction--

- and in the end, the 4th and last Empire was portrayed as a large ugly monster that would produce the world's final and supposedly greatest leader.
- He would be a man who is an arrogant, contemptable, biblically lawless, lying, deceitful, vicious satanic individual, who will lead the world to fully reject anything that has to do with God and Christ.
- And he will blaspheme God, and seek to completely destroy God's people, both Jews and believers. (the antichrist)

Now we come to Ch 8- (read v1) Now it's 2 years later, after Daniel's ch 7 dream.

- At this point, Daniel is about 72, and he's been living in Babylon for roughly 57 years, since his teens, and he was heavily involved in his earlier years, in the Empire's administration.

- He knows for a fact how deeply evil this pagan Empire is. Much earlier, God used him and his 3 Hebrew friends to bring spiritual change to King. Neb's heart and life in ch. 4.
- He no doubt, hoped and prayed they could be the same kind of influence on the kings who followed, but that didn't happen, they all were wicked.
- At this time, He's living under foolish wicked Belshazzar who is a failing leader and who will lose the kingdom to Persia in about 12 years. (we saw that story in ch. 5)
- So, from Ch. 7, God gave Daniel 2 years to think about the truth given to him about antichrist, before He received this Ch 8 vision, which gives him more troubling information.

3. Notice the setting of this vision. (2- read)

- In the vision, Daniel saw himself "in the citadel (palace) of Susa, beside the Ulai Canal".
- Remember, at this time, Daniel is in Babylon. Susa was a border town in Persia, about 230 miles away, that didn't become a royal city with a palace and this man-made canal, until 30 years later. (Later, Nehemiah was cup bearer here, and Ester was Queen)
- So the palace Daniel saw himself in, and the river he was beside, didn't exist at this time, but it all came to pass, just as he saw it and wrote about it. (That's Divine accuracy)

4. Notice the impact of the vision. (Read 15-18) (1st part of Ch. is vision, last part is interpretation.)

- As Daniel saw himself imbedded in the vision, and was contemplating what it meant, the angel Gabriel appeared to explain things, and Daniel fainted at his presence and had to be revived. (this is how bible characters reacted to angels, [at Jesus' tomb])

Finally notice-- This vision has 3 main elements.

- In this vision, God singles out and focuses on the 2 middle Empires of the 4. (Bab,Prs,Grc,Rm)
- There are 2 animals- a **Ram** depicting **Persia**, and a **Male Goat** depicting **Greece**.
- The male goat has a **prominent horn**, representing the first king of the Greek Empire, and then, near the end of the Greek Empire, another **small horn** (king) arises. (key)
- * This is to show Daniel that long before the final empire produces the antichrist that persecutes the Jews, God will send another **small horn** (king) to arise much sooner in history, and persecute the Jews because of their long-term sin and disobedience to God.

@ We will explore **THE RAM**, **THE GOAT** and another **SMALL HORN**

I. THE RAM. (3-4, 20- read) The vision teaches us about the Ram with 6 details.

1. In v20, Daniel is told- THE RAM IS THE EMPIRE OF MEDIO-PERSIA.

- * Overall, in Daniel's visions, the chest and arms of silver (c2), the bear (c7) and now the Ram all represent the Medio-Persian Empire. But why is this Empire now shown as a Ram?
- * The Ram was Persia's political symbol. When Persian kings dressed for ceremony, or Generals went to battle, they wore a hat that made from the head of a ram.
- * Also, the Ram was their religious symbol. Their guardian spirit was a ram, (and now, modern astrology has the sign of Aries, which is a ram, which stems from ancient Persian religion.)

2. In v3- THE RAM HAS 2 LONG HORNS

- * The Medo-Persian Empire evolved from a partnership between Media and Persia in 550 bc.
- * This Empire was seen in Neb's dream by the 2 arms of silver, joined together at the chest.

3. Also, in v3- "ONE HORN WAS LONGER THAN THE OTHER, BUT IT GREW UP LATER."

- * This describes how Darius led Media to be a major power (long horn), but later, Cyrus made Persia stronger, which motivated Darius to join Media with Persia, and not be conquered.
- * The Ch. 7 vision portrayed this with a bear standing with 1 side higher than the other, depicting Persia as being stronger than Media when they joined together.

4. In v4- THE RAM CHARGED WEST, NORTH, AND SOUTH. This describes history.

- Medio-Persia (Iran) took Babylon, Turkey, and Syria in the **west**, Armenia and the Caspian Sea in the **north**, and Egypt and Ethiopia in the **south**. (ch7 - 3 ribs in bear's mouth)

5 Also in v4- 'NO ONE COULD STAND AGAINST THEM, OR BE RESCUED FROM THEM'.

- * 150 years before Daniel, Isaiah 45:1-2 said- God would use Cyrus to "open doors before him, strip kings of their armor, level mountains; break down gates and subdue nations."
- * In history, Persia filled their armies with hordes of foreign people, making it easy to conquer powerfully, and take much more land than Babylon possessed, just like Isaiah said.

Finally, in v4-- THE RAM- " DID AS HE PLEASED AND BECAME GREAT". (4c)

- * This refers to the domineering arrogance of Darius and Cyrus of Medio- Persia.

II. THE GOAT. (5-8, 21-22- read)

Notice 5 main details given about the goat.

1. In v21 the angel said- **THE GOAT REPRESENTS THE KINGDOM OF GREECE.**

- * Greece is a goat because an early leader of their province, claimed the gods told him to follow a goat that would take him to a certain city. The goat led him to Edessa (NE Greece).
- * That leader changed the city's name to Egaea which means, "the goat city", so as Greece arose to become a full-blown kingdom, the goat became their national symbol.

2. Vs 5, 21- tell us about- **THE FIRST AND MAIN KING OF THE GREEK EMPIRE.**

- * Vs 5 says- "the goat had a prominent horn between its eyes." (a horn is a ruler)
- * Vs 21 says this was their 1st king, who in history, was Alexander the Great.
- * Normally, goats have 2 horns above the eyes, this goat has 1 big horn between the eyes which is a picture of the extreme intelligence of Alexander the Great.
- * He was trained by Aristotle, and became king at age 21 after his father, and was such a military genius, he used only 50,000 men to conquer armies that were much larger.

3. Vs 5- Tells us - **HOW GREECE CONQUERED.**

- * It says - They "came from the west, across the whole earth, not touching the ground."
- * In their time, Greece was the farthest western Empire of any size, and it conquered all the Persian Empire and many other lands, in less than 10 years- (an amazing ancient feat)
(In ch. 7, this empire was depicted as a leopard with 4 wings- extremely fast)

4. Vs 6-7 describe **HOW THIS GOAT (Greece) ATTACKED THE RAM (Persia).**

- * Vs 6-7 say- "he charged *the Ram* at great rage and attacked furiously".
And - "The Ram was powerless..., was trampled...., and no one could rescue him".
- * Alexander attacked Persia with furious rage because, for centuries Persia enslaved the outlying areas of Greece, so the Greeks deeply hated the Persian's.
- * In their first battle, Alexander had only 35,000 men, but defeated 110k Persian soldiers.
- * They killed 100,000 Persian soldiers, but Alexander only lost 100 of his own men. (tough)
- * And Alexander went on to conquer all the Persian Empire in just 4 years,
and then took all of Europe and North Africa, in just 6 more years. (astoundingly fast)

5. In vs 8, 22- we learn- **THE GOAT'S LEADERSHIP CHANGED.** (key to this vision)

- * Vs 8 says- "The goat became very great, but at the height of his power his large horn was broken off, and in its place 4 prominent horns grew up toward the four winds of heaven."
- * V22 says- "The four horns that replaced the one that was broken off, represent four kingdoms that will emerge from his Empire (Alexander), but will not have the same power."
- * In history, When Alexander finished conquering at age 33, he went to Babylon, and then partied until he died from drinking, This was the large horn being broken off of Greece.
- * Then, for the next 22 years, Alexander's generals quarreled over who would be the next king.
- * Finally, the 4 top Generals agreed to split the Empire so each one could take 1/4th.
- * And just as vs 8 says, these 4 leaders "grew up toward the 4 winds of heaven", meaning, they divided the Empire by direction. 1 took the west section, 1 the east, 1 the north, 1 the south.
(Casander - west, Lysim'-achus - north, Seleucus - east, Ptolemy - south.)
- * But also, as vs 22 says- none of them ever gained near the power of Alexander's Empire.

Sum- In this vision, Daniel learned about 2 more men, that would be earlier replica's of that final world ruler, the antichrist.

- * Alexander the Great was 1 of these rulers described in this vision.
- * Much like the coming Antichrist, Alexander conquered ingeniously, quickly, effectively, and with great strength and ability.
- * But also like the coming Antichrist, at the height of His success and authority, right after he conquered all of the then-known-world, Alexander was quickly destroyed, due to his sin.

NOTE about prophecy- Daniel wrote the information in this vision, 250 years before any of this ever happened. And all of it came to pass, perfectly, just as he was shown by God's angel.

- * The Ram which was Medio- Persia conquered Babylon,
- * The goat which was Greece conquered Persia very quickly,
- * And Alexander the great was perfectly described by what the angel showed Daniel.