

GABRIEL'S INTERPRETATION OF THE RAM AND GOAT

(Dan 8:15-27) 04/22/20

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I. GABRIEL GIVES UNDERSTANDING (Dan 8:15-19)

A. Daniel Saw a Man (15)

1. Needed Understanding - Similar to Dan 7:16, Daniel needed aid in understanding the interpretation of his vision.
2. Gabriel the Angel - Daniel observed a being that "looked like a man." He did not say it was a man, it only looked like a man. At times, angels appear as men (Gen 18:2 cf. Gen 19:1). This was probably the angel Gabriel whose name means "mighty one of God." Here the Hebrew word for "man" is *geber* and would mean "mighty man."
3. Gabriel in the Bible - Gabriel is mentioned 4 times in Scripture and this is the first mention (Dan 8:16; 9:21; Luk 1:19, 26). This is the first mention in the Bible of any angel's name.

B. Gabriel to Give Understanding (16) - The voice of a man that came from the bank of the River Ulai was most likely the voice of God. He spoke to Gabriel (i.e. man "standing before" Daniel cf. Dan 8:2) to give Daniel understanding of the vision.

C. Understand Time of the End (17)

1. Fell on His Face - Prostration or a loss of speech and/or consciousness is a reaction to a heavenly visitation of some kind (Eze 1:28; Isa 6:5; Rev 1:17; 19:10)
2. "Time of the End"
 - a. Antiochus IV Epiphanes - This is a phrase that obviously refers to a time future to Daniel. Because of the context of Daniel, the "time of the end" likely has a double sense of fulfillment. The first is a near future event of two of Daniel's four nations with a specific reference to Antiochus IV Epiphanes (Dan 8:11-14; 11:21-35).
 - b. Antichrist - The second is a distant future event at the end of God's program during the Antichrist's reign in the Tribulation ("final period of the indignation," Dan 8:19 cf. Dan 11:36-45).

D. Daniel Fell Asleep (18) - The reason Daniel fell asleep was not due to boredom over the details of prophecy. Rather, it was out of the fearfulness of an angelic being (cf. Dan 8:17). Gabriel brought Daniel out of his unconscious state.

E. Final Period of Indignation (19)

1. Day of the Lord - Though the following verse will speak of the two empires, namely, the "ram" (Medo-Persia) and the "goat" (Greece), the "final period of indignation" is a term closely associated with the "Day of the Lord" during the Tribulation (Joe 3:11-14; Rev 6:16-17).
2. Appointed time of the end - The real emphasis should be on the fact that the events and details of the future kingdoms are an "appointed time" by the sovereignty of God.

II. GABRIEL INTERPRETS RAM AND GOAT (Dan 8:20-23)

A. Ram is Medo-Persian Empire (20) - Gabriel gave Daniel the interpretation of his vision recorded in Dan 8:3-4. The ram with two horns, one larger than the other, refers to the Medo-Persian Empire with the Persians being the stronger of the two.

B. Shaggy Goat is Greek Empire (21) - Gabriel also gave Daniel the meaning of the shaggy goat with a single large horn between his eyes (cf. Dan 8:5-8). It is the kingdom of Greece. History leads the majority of scholars to conclude that the single large horn was Alexander the Great. Especially in light of the description that he virtually conquered the world in a short time ("without touching the ground").

C. Four Horns Are Four Divided Kingdoms (22) - After Alexander's death, four of his generals divided his kingdom. Nevertheless, they did not have Alexander's power or authority. In addition, there was much strife between them as depicted by the great detail in Dan 11:3-18.

D. Another King in Latter Period (23) - In the latter period of the Greek Empire, a king will arise. This is none other than Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Not only is that almost unanimously concluded by all

scholars, but Daniel's amazing details in Dan 11:21-35 are unmistakable. In addition, Josephus and 1&2 Maccabees contribute to the biblical account.

III. GABRIEL GIVES CHARACTERISTICS OF ANTIOCHUS IV EPIPHANES (Dan 8:23-25).

A. Insolent and skilled in intrigue (23)

1. Antiochus - He was "insolent" (*Heb. az - strong or mighty, many times in a negative sense*) in the sense that he was strong-willed and bold in defying all authority of both men and God. He was also "skilled" in riddles. It does not necessarily mean that he was a man of wit, but a man who spoke in riddles so that no one knew what he meant (i.e. deception cf. Dan 11:21).
2. Antichrist - He will be a charismatic speaker with a false pretense of peace (cf. Rev 6:2 cf. Dan 9:27).

B. Mighty, but not by his own power (24)

1. Antiochus - The only reason Antiochus came to power was that God allowed it. Just like Nebuchadnezzar, God allowed their reign to accomplish His purposes.
2. Antichrist - The same is true of the Antichrist. God will allow him to come to power in order to put an end of Satan's best efforts (Rev 12:3) and to deliver Israel (Rev 12:6).

C. Destroyed to an extraordinary degree

1. Antiochus - The number of deaths at the hands of Antiochus were extraordinary. For example, it is reported that he massacred 80,000 Jews in Jerusalem (cf. Dan 11:28, 30, 33).
2. Antichrist - There will be one of the largest numbers of martyrdom in a seven-year period under the Antichrist (Rev 6:10-11; 17:6).

D. Prospered and performed his will

1. Antiochus - He will have a single focus on complete power and rule while stopping at nothing to get it.
2. Antichrist - He will uproot three kings who evidently do not agree with His rule (Dan 7:8, 20, 24).

E. Destroyed mighty men and holy people

1. Antiochus - He would destroy anyone, no matter what position or relationship they possessed in order to bring about his own success.
2. Antichrist - The Antichrist will not be stopped and will kill the two witnesses (Rev 11:7).

F. Caused deceit to succeed (25)

1. Antiochus - Antiochus was an unbelievably deceitful man. His strategy for success and power was deceit (Dan 11:23, 27).
2. Antichrist - The Antichrist, Satan's CEO, utilizes his strategy of deceit in his false resurrection and the worship of the himself (Rev 13:14).

G. Magnified himself in his heart

1. Antiochus - He named himself "*Theou Epiphanous Nikêphorou Basileōs Antiochou*" (King Antiochus, God manifest, bearer of victory). But the people named him "Antiochus Epimanes" ["The Mad One"] (Dan 8:1a).
2. Antichrist - He will claim to be God and demand worship (Rev 13:8;).

H. Destroyed many while they are at ease

1. Antiochus - He will destroy many who think he wants peace; however, such plans are part of his evil scheming (Dan 11:24).
2. Antichrist - He will make peace between Israel and the nations by signing a covenant. However, the Antichrist will break that covenant in only 3 ½ yrs (Dan 9:27).

I. Opposed the Prince of Princes

1. Antiochus - Ultimately, Antiochus challenged and opposed Christ ("prince of princes") when he stopped Jewish sacrifices to Yahweh for the sacrifices to Zeus. He committed the "abomination of desolation" when he sacrificed a pig on the altar in the Temple (Dan 8:11b; 11:28, 31).
2. Antichrist - According to Daniel, the Antichrist will commit the ultimate "abomination of desolation" (Dan 9:27; 12:11 cf. Mat 24:15). He will set up his own image and take his seat on the throne in the Temple (2Th 2:3-4).

J. Broken without human agency

1. Antiochus - Divine agency, not human agency will be the reason he is broken and brought to the end of his power.
2. Antichrist - He will reign until the Lord returns, defeats him and his armies, and throws him into the Lake of Fire (Rev 19:20).

IV. GABRIEL GIVES FINAL INSTRUCTIONS (Dan 8:26-27)

- A. Daniel Was to Keep it a Secret (26) - The idea here is that Daniel was to preserve these prophecies because they would not be fulfilled until future generations.
- B. Daniel Went Back to Normal Life (27) - The reality of these prophecies took a toll on Daniel's physical condition. He went back to his normal life, but he went back a changed man.











V. OBSERVATIONS AND APPLICATIONS

A. Tradition of Maccabees and Hanukkah

1. Antiochus IV - *Antiochus III began a program of Hellenization that threatened to force the Jews to abandon their monotheism for the Greeks' paganism. Antiochus III backed down in the face of Jewish opposition to his effort to introduce idols in their temples, but his son, Antiochus IV, who inherited the throne in 176 B.C. resumed his father's original policy without excepting the Jews. A brief Jewish rebellion only hardened his views and led him to outlaw central tenets of Judaism such as the Sabbath and circumcision, and defile the holy Temple by erecting an altar to the god Zeus, allowing the sacrifice of pigs, and opening the shrine to non-Jews (Jewish Virtual Library).*
2. The Jewish Hammer - *Though many Jews had been seduced by the virtues of Hellenism, the extreme measures adopted by Antiochus helped unite the people. When a Greek official tried to force a priest named Mattathias to make a sacrifice to a pagan god, the Jew murdered the man. Predictably, Antiochus began reprisals, but in 167 BCE the Jews rose up behind Mattathias and his five sons and fought for their liberation. The family of Mattathias became known as the Maccabees, from the Hebrew word for "hammer," because they were said to strike hammer blows against their enemies. Jews refer to the Maccabees, but the family is more commonly known as the Hasmoneans. Like other rulers before him, Antiochus underestimated the will and strength of his Jewish adversaries and sent a small force to put down the rebellion. When that was annihilated, he led a more powerful army into battle only to be defeated. In 164 BCE, [the same year of Antiochus' death] Jerusalem was recaptured by the Maccabees and the Temple purified, an event that gave birth to the holiday of Chanukah. JVL*
3. Hanukkah - *According to tradition as recorded in the Talmud, at the time of the rededication, there was very little oil left that had not been defiled by the Greeks. Oil was needed for the menorah (candelabrum) in the Temple, which was supposed to burn throughout the night every night. There was only enough oil to burn for one day, yet miraculously, it burned for eight days. An eight-day festival was declared to commemorate this miracle. JVL*

B. Reality Of These Prophecies

1. The real import of these Scriptures is not necessarily the observance of a holiday, but the reality of these future prophecies,
2. In a sense, the reality of these prophecies should take a toll on us like Daniel. Maybe they won't make us physically sick, but they should move us. So many are doing some heroic things to save lives these days. That is great and they should keep it up.
3. But believers should take these spiritual realities far more seriously than how the world seriously takes earthly things.
4. After studying Daniel and Revelation, we should go back to our normal life, but we should not go back the same. We should be changed people.

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream		Dan 2:37-45	7:1-8	8:3-11
	GOLD	BABYLONIAN (605-539 B.C.) (Dan 2:32, 37-38; 7:4) (King Nebuchadnezzar)		
	SILVER	MEDO-PERSIAN (539-331 B.C.) (Dan 2:32, 39a; 5:31; 6:28; 7:5) (Cyrus the Great)		
	BRONZE	GREEK (331 - 63 B.C.) (Dan 2:32, 39b; 7:6) (Alexander the Great)		
	IRON	ROMAN (63 B.C. - A.D. 476) (Dan 2:33, 40; 7:7a) (Caesars)		
	IRON /CLAY	REVIVED EMPIRE OF 10 KINGS (Dan 2:33, 41-43; 7:7b-8, 11, 19-21, 23-25; 9:26; Rev 12:3; 13:1) (Little Horn - Antichrist)		 Antiochus Epiphanes (Type of Antichrist)
	STONE	CHRIST'S MILLENN. KINGDOM (Dan 2:34-35, 44-45; 7:13-14, 18, 22, 26-27; Rev 20:4) (The Lord Jesus Christ)	