

Daniel 8 • An Amazing Prophecy of Things to Come

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Let's get into some Scripture tonight, shall we? We've got a great chapter that we're going to cover tonight here in the book of Daniel so make sure your Bibles are open to Daniel Chapter eight. All right. And it's good for you to be able to see this in your Bible so that you can follow along.

What we're going to do is read through the chapter like we did last week, and then we're going to go back over it and look at what it has to say, because this is a wonderfully prophetic chapter about things related to the last days. And so, let's go ahead and read through Daniel chapter eight, beginning at verse one.

Follow along with me as I do it says,

¹In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me, Daniel, after that which appeared to me at the first. ² And I saw in the vision; and when I saw, I was in Susa the citadel, which is in the province of Elam. And I saw in the vision, and I was at the Ulai canal. ³ I raised my eyes and saw, and behold, a ram standing on the bank of the canal. It had two horns, and both horns were high, but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last.

⁴ I saw the ram charging westward and northward and southward. No beast could stand before him, and there was no one who could rescue from his power. He did as he pleased and became great. ⁵ As I was considering, behold, a male goat came from the west across the face of the whole earth, without touching the ground. And the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes. ⁶ He came to the ram with the two horns, which I had seen standing on the bank of the canal, and he ran at him in his powerful wrath.

⁷ I saw him come close to the ram, and he was enraged against him and struck the ram and broke his two horns. And the ram had no power to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled on him. And there was no one who could rescue the ram from his power. ⁸ Then the goat became exceedingly great, but when he was strong, the great horn was broken, and

instead of it there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven.

⁹ Out of one of them came a little horn, which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the glorious land. ¹⁰ It grew great, even to the host of heaven. And some of the host and some of the stars it threw down to the ground and trampled on them. ¹¹ It became great, even as great as the Prince of the host. And the regular burnt offering was taken away from him, and the place of his sanctuary was overthrown.

¹² And a host will be given over to it together with the regular burnt offering because of transgression, (I guess because of the transgression) and it will throw truth to the ground, and it will act and prosper. ¹³ Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to the one who spoke, "For how long is the vision concerning the regular burnt offering, the transgression that makes desolate, and the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled underfoot?" ¹⁴ And he said to me, "For 2,300 evenings and mornings. Then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state."

¹⁵ When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it. And behold, there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. ¹⁶ And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, and it called, "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision." ¹⁷ So he came near where I stood. And when he came, I was frightened and fell on my face. But he said to me, "Understand, O son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end."

¹⁸ And when he had spoken to me, I fell into a deep sleep with my face to the ground. But he touched me and made me stand up. ¹⁹ He said, "Behold, I will make known to you what shall be at the latter end of the indignation, for it refers to the appointed time of the end. ²⁰ As for the ram that you saw with the two horns, these are the kings of Media and Persia.

²¹ And the goat is the king of Greece. And the great horn between his eyes is the first king. ²² As for the horn that was broken, in place of which four others arose, four kingdoms shall arise from his nation, but not with his power. ²³ And at the latter end of their kingdom, when the transgressors have reached their limit, a king of bold face, one who understands riddles, shall arise.

²⁴ His power shall be great—but not by his own power; and he shall cause fearful destruction and shall succeed in what he does and destroy mighty men and the people who are the saints. ²⁵ By his cunning he shall make deceit

prosper under his hand, and in his own mind he shall become great. Without warning he shall destroy many. And he shall even rise up against the Prince of princes, and he shall be broken—but by no human hand.

²⁶ The vision of the evenings and the mornings that has been told is true, but seal up the vision, for it refers to many days from now ²⁷ And I, Daniel, was overcome and lay sick for some days. Then I rose and went about the king's business, but I was appalled by the vision and did not understand it."

Let's pray, shall we?

Heavenly Father, as we get into these Scriptures tonight, we are mindful of the words of our Lord Jesus when He said, I am the vine, and you are the branches and apart from me, you can do nothing. And we know that primarily refers to bearing fruit, but Lord, it also we know, applies to understanding. Because Lord, all knowledge and understanding is found in you. And so, Lord, we just confess to you that we are nothing without you, and that we can't understand these things without you Lord.

We are dust and you are the eternal God. And so we pray tonight for wisdom and insight, and I pray my Father God, that you would lead us in truth and grace, to lay hold of what you have given us here in the revelation of this Scripture. And help us, Lord, to use it to understand what your Word has to say and to prepare for this time of the end, we ask you, Lord, in Jesus precious name, amen. Amen.

Well, this is a great chapter, I have to say. And as we begin chapter eight, there's something that you may not realize because you're reading all of the book of Daniel in English. But what you may not know is that starting here with Daniel chapter eight, Daniel switches back to the Hebrew language right around after the first few verses of chapter two, he switched to Aramaic which is the language that would be most prevalent for a Chaldean who might be reading this. And he has kept to the Aramaic language up through chapter seven. But now we begin in Hebrew once again because the things that are spoken here are more pertaining to the people of Israel and to the land of the Jews.

So, we begin here with another important timestamp, you'll notice, as to when this vision is being given. Daniel begins by saying, in the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar, and you'll remember that King Belshazzar was the last king of Babylon. So, this is still, while Babylon is in power, but they are soon to be overtaken by the Medo-Persian empire.

But this is exactly when this happens. And Daniel says that he had a vision after that, which appeared to him at the first. And so, this is now two years since he received his last vision during the first year of King Belshazzar. Verse number two says, ² *“And I saw in the vision; and when I saw, I was in Susa the citadel..”*

And you'd be interested to know that Susa was one of the Persian capital cities, and he says that he was there in the citadel which is literally a fortress. Many times, back in those days, they would build their castles, their cities, if not a single castle, on a rise of ground, and it would be referred to as a citadel, and they put them up on upper, you get your city or your castle aloft because it's easier to defend against enemies that way. But that was simply the definition of a citadel.

Your Bible, instead of Susa, if you have a new King James on your lap, your Bible says Shushan. It's the same city, just with a different pronunciation and reading on, he says in the middle of verse two, *“which is in the province of Elam.”* And there he says, *“...I saw the vision and I was at the Eli canal.”* And now he begins giving us the information or the insights from the vision. He says, ³ *“I raised my eyes and I saw and behold a ram standing on the bank of the canal...”* And then he begins to describe the ram.

He says, ³ *“...it had two horns and both horns were high, but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last.”*

Now, ever since Daniel has begun, the book of Daniel has begun we've been seeing in various visions and dreams, some given to Nebuchadnezzar, and now given to Daniel, a succession of kingdoms. And it started with this big statue that Nebuchadnezzar saw. This head of gold, and then the shoulders and chest of silver, and so on and on down to the end of the, and each one of those elements of the statue, you'll remember, stood for a different kingdom that would come into world power.

Well, we've received that same message several ways now through the course of this study, and we're still receiving it, but here's what's interesting. We no longer are talking or starting with Babylon. This first vision, this first world power, represented in the picture of the ram, is the Medo-Persian empire. Babylon is about to fall off the stage of the world leadership and the Medo-Persian empire is about to come into power.

Daniel was still alive when it did. But you'll notice that the ram has two horns and one of those refers to Media and the other one to Persia. But you'll also

notice in the vision that Daniel sees that one horn is slightly higher, although they're both big, one is higher than the other. And that speaks of the fact that Persia, of the Medo-Persian empire, was actually larger and stronger than that of the Meads. And so he's just simply seeing a picture of Medo- Persia and he says in verse four, ⁴ *"I saw the ram charging westward and northward and southward. (And he says that) No beast could stand before him (And what that means is no nation, wherever the Medo-Persian empire went in their conquering military might could stand against them.) "...no one (he says) could rescue from his power. He did as he pleased and became great."*

So there you go, the Meads and the Persians were the big, tough guys on the block for a period of time. But of course, these things always end right, and somebody else comes up and rises to power, and that's what we see next. Verse five. ⁵ *"As I was considering, behold, a male goat came from the west across the face of the whole earth, without touching the ground. And the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes."*

Now we know. I mean, this is all past history to us, so we know what kingdom comes next. We've seen it in several visions already in Daniel, and you can read about it in your history books. You know you can read a history book and find out that who were the meads in the Persians conquered by? They were conquered by Greece. We know that. But you'll notice here that Greece is represented by this, well, it's represented and described in several ways.

He describes it as a male goat that came from the west, which of course is the direction of Greece. And from what I've read, as much as up to 200 years before the time of Daniel, the Greeks were actually referred to as goats or the goats. I don't know why, or the goats people. I have no idea why that name was given to them, but it's interesting that they are represented in this vision with a male goat, and you'll notice next he describes this goat as having come across the face of the whole earth. And that, of course speaks of the many conquests of Greece, rather, moving across the land.

But we're reminded as we were in the last vision, that those conquests came quickly. They were very rapid. And you'll notice that it says that this male goat comes without touching the ground. What do you think about when you think of a goat running along the ground without touching the ground? I remember back in the 1960s, Watching Roadrunner cartoons. I think of Roadrunner. Remember Roadrunner?

He would, when he'd run, his legs wouldn't touch the ground. He was, he did. In fact, they were just a blur. He, oh my God, this is the way he's seeing it in this

vision. It's kind of like a Roadrunner cartoon. So it's pretty cool. Anyway, so we see this reference to the swiftness by which the Grecian military army conquered the land, the entire land. And by the way, that single horn that is between the eyes of the goat you notice that he refers to it as a conspicuous horn. Your Bible may say prominent.

Well, that's Alexander the Great. We know that from history, who was the very visible leader of the Grecian military movement until his untimely death at aged like 33 or 34, something like that. And now notice here how he describes the Grecian army conquering the Medo-Persian empire. Verse six, it says, ⁶ *"He came to the ram with the two horns, which I had seen standing on the bank of the canal, and he ran at him in his powerful wrath."*

He just charged at him. And so we read here in verse seven that he broke the horns of the ram, which means he toppled the Medo-Persian empire, trampling it to the ground, and there was nobody to rescue them. In other words, there were no aligned nations that could come to their rescue. So now Greece is the world power under the leadership of Alexander the Great. And we're told here in verse eight that, ⁸ *"Then the goat became exceedingly great, (hence his name) but when he was strong, (and that means at the height of his power) the great horn was broken, (and that's how Alexander died. And he says here in the vision) instead of it (meaning the representation of the strength of Alexander the Great. He says,) there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven."*

And so Alexander the Great dies and these four horns come up after him who represent, and we again know this from history, four of Alexander's generals. Now, understand, Alexander didn't expect to die. He was a young man, relatively, when he did die, so he made no provision for the kingdom to pass to anybody. He had four generals in his army, who then when Alexander died, fought for control of the land that Alexander had gained during his time as a military leader.

And so those four fought and retained four parts of Alexander's Kingdom. Now, here as we get to verse nine, I want to kind of call your attention to this, because this is where this vision takes a different direction from the visions that we've seen here to fore, because you're going to remember in the last vi, well, frankly in, all in, in all the visions we've seen so far of these successive kingdoms, they've gone Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and then Rome.

Right, and we saw how Rome is a picture of the government structure of the anti-Christ. It's a foreshadowing of that. Well, we're not going to talk about

Rome today. This vision takes a slightly different turn, and yet what we see in the following verses is also going to be a foreshadowing of the kingdom or the power of the anti-Christ. But it's going to speak of another king that is going to rise up from these four generals who came to power when Alexander the Great died as a fairly young man, all right? So, it begins in verse nine. Follow this with me where he says,

⁹ “Out of one of them (meaning out of one of the kingdoms of the four generals, okay. He says,) came a little horn, which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, (and this is why this is in Hebrew) and toward the glorious land.”

In other words, the land of Israel is referenced there as the glorious land. Now we need to pause for just a moment because we need to identify this little horn or this power that came out of one of the four kingdoms that came out of Alexander the Great's Grecian kingdom. This little horn needs to be identified so we can understand what this vision is all about.

Now, since we know, or we're told in this vision where this power, this King's dominion extends, we know that it extended to the south, to the east, and toward Israel. We know that Daniel is receiving a prophetic message about a coming king by the name of Antiochus Epiphanes. Actually, the whole name is Antiochus Epiphanes the fourth. But he was a particular man who ruled over Syria, which rose up from one of the four kingdoms that Alexander left behind during the time of the Seleucid Dynasty.

And Antiochus Epiphanes is going to take center stage on what we see here in the remainder of this chapter because, let me just say this, history, if you've ever, if you remember your history, your ancient history, and you remember Grecian history and how that turned into four kingdoms and how Antiochus Epiphanes rose up. Let's just say he was a piece of work, and what I mean by that is that he is remembered in history as one of the cruelest and most deadly rulers ever to rise to power in the history of mankind.

He took over the throne of his father by murdering his brother, and he grew in power. You notice how he says this was a little horn that became exceedingly great. Well, how did it become exceedingly great? History tells us. He essentially bribed his way into greatness and murdered his way into greatness. He gave himself the title Antiochus Epiphanes. And the word Epiphanes means illustrious, and it hints at the idea of him being god-like.

Well, the Jews had a name for him too. Instead of calling him Epiphanes, they called him Epimanes, which means crazy man. Seriously. Or like madman. And that's really, it was a very apt description because that was very much what he was like. Now, verse 10 gets very interesting. He begins to talk about this power that is Antiochus Epiphanes.

¹⁰ "It grew great, even to the host of heaven. And some of the host and some of the stars it threw down to the ground and trampled on them."

Now be careful here. This language sounds slightly reminiscent of the fall of Satan from heaven, but that's not what it's referring to. The term host in this verse, or stars, if you will, are used symbolically in the Old Testament. And while they can be used to describe angels, they can also refer to kings, or even national leaders, and at sometimes they even make reference to the general public of the Jews particularly, okay?

So, we know that it's talking about the leaders of the Jews because we know what Antiochus Epiphanes did. We know that he persecuted and murdered the Jews and Jewish leaders, particularly. And so, we understand that these symbols of the host and the stars refer to God's people here being murdered. He was, he hated anything Jewish. If he found a Jewish baby boy, he would hang it by the neck.

He would murder people on site. I mean, he was just, he was vicious and cruel and a terrible, terrible man. So as Daniel goes on here, he sees some of what Antiochus will do to the Jewish people. Look at verse 11. He writes,

¹¹ "It became great, even as great as the Prince of the host. (In other words, the King of the Jews) And the regular (This is interesting, the regular) burnt offering was taken away from him, and the place of his sanctuary (and that means the temple) was overthrown."

And so, what we're seeing is when Antiochus Epiphanes came into power, he unseated any other rulers that were over the Jews at that time, and not only that, but he stopped the daily sacrifice from happening. And he put it to an end. He said, no more, we're not going to do this anymore. We're not, I'm not going to let you sacrifice to your God any longer, right? And it's going to get worse than that. It says, *"..that the place of his sanctuary was overthrown."*

And we know from history that what Antiochus Epiphanes did is he actually erected an altar to Zeus in the Holy of Holies, and he there at the altar he sacrificed a pig. Which, as you know, was unclean to a Jew. They couldn't eat

pigs. But not only did he sacrifice a pig, he sprinkled the blood of that pig on all around the sanctuary, all around the temple. Thus, defiling it entirely for the Jews and, he made the Jews eat the meat of the pig, which of course again, was just he wanted, he was desperate to defile everything they believed in and held dear.

Okay. Anything related to the law of Moses, anything related to Yahweh and their worship, he wanted to ruin it, and he did a very good job, actually. Verse 12 goes on to say,

¹² *“And a host (And that again, is referring to people) will be given over to it (in other words, to him) together with the regular burnt offering (And then we're told why) because of transgression, and it will throw truth to the ground, and it will act and prosper.”*

By the way, when you go back and read ancient history, and you learn about Antiochus Epiphanes, these prophetic insights are accurate to a T. In fact, they're so accurate liberal scholars deny that Daniel wrote it at the time of his life. They believe someone else wrote this much later. They said there's no way it can be that accurate. Completely denying the fact that God knows the beginning from the end and vice versa. But anyway, that's how incredibly accurate these prophecies are related to this.

So again, in verse 10, he says that the, I actually, I'm sorry I meant verse 12, *“the host will be given over to it, the burnt offering as well.”* And notice here again, *“because of the transgression”* and that's a very interesting point to be made. The Jews had fallen to a very, into a very deep moral hole by this time, and they actually invited this judgment because they had moved so far away. The priesthood was now gained by murder and intrigue and bribery.

And many of the Jews were led astray into idolatry and all kinds of other things. But, and then Antiochus came and just made life incredibly difficult for them. It is said that Antiochus murdered more than a hundred thousand Jews. He openly blasphemed God, he openly opposed God. But here's the interesting thing. He prospered in all he did because the Lord allowed him to for a time. He eventually went mad. Like these people often do.

But while he was there during this period of time, he prospered in his intrigue and cruelty because of transgressions, and that's an important point. I don't know if you guys have ever read, there are a couple, what we call apocryphal books. You can find them in a Roman Catholic Bible. We don't accept them as

canonical or inspired, but you can find them in a Catholic Bible, and they're called, they're the books of First and Second Maccabees.

And while we don't consider them inspired, we do consider them to be a good source of historical information. And if you can actually read about what we call the Maccabean Revolt, which was the revolt against Antiochus Epiphanes where Judas Maccabeus put together an army and came into the city, Maccabi or the king wasn't there at the time. But Judas Maccabees came into the city, took the city away from whatever army was there, left there by Antiochus.

And he not only conquered that army, but he then went in and cleansed the temple and so they were able to restore the sacrificial system of the Jews. But you can read about that particularly in first Maccabees, if you ever get a hold of it. And it is some good historical reading. So, verse 13,

¹³ "Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to the one who spoke, "For how long is the vision concerning the regular burnt offering, the transgression that makes desolate, and the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled underfoot?"

In other words, how long is this? And he's basically asking, how long is this going to happen? How long is this Antiochus Epiphanes, who, of course Daniel has never heard that name before, because that's yet to come. He just simply knows this as this final, beast, if you will, or horn. How long is this all going to happen? How long is he going to be able to trample underfoot the sanctuary or the temple? Verse 14,

¹⁴ "And he said to me, "For 2,300 evenings and mornings. Then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state."

Isn't that interesting? Now, we know who restored the temple to its rightful state. That was Judas Maccabeus. And we know exactly when it took place because hey, we have historical documents telling us, and by the way, this was a little more than a hundred years before the birth of Christ, when Judas Maccabeus came in and did his stuff. It was around 167 B.C., something like that.

Okay. So now we've got this interesting number. These angels are talking among themselves, and one says, how long is this going to go on? And one says, *for 2300 evenings and mornings*. Now, here's what Bible scholars differ on, okay? And I'm just going to throw this out to you. They don't know whether this refers to 2300 days. Some people think it does. But some people think it

means 2300 sacrifices. Because you see, the Jews made a daily sacrifice twice a day. They had a morning and an evening sacrifice, so there are some who believe this means 2300 sacrifices, which would be what, 1,150 days, and some people believe it's 2300 days.

Here's what's interesting. Both numbers work, and I'll tell you why. The 2300 days is the amount of time from when Antiochus Epiphanes began to persecute the Jews until the time that the temple was cleansed. 1,150 days is the time from when he defiled the temple to when the temple was cleansed, and they were returned to the sacrificial system. So, both numbers work, interestingly enough.

Personally, I think it probably refers to the time of the defiling of the temple. So I go with this means 2300 sacrifices that are going to be put away or 1,150 days. But anyway, either way, like I said, either interpretation works. Verse 15,

¹⁵ *"When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it."* (Now remember, all this is future to Daniel. This is, this is all future to him. The Medo-Persian army hasn't even come into power yet. They're soon going to, but Greece is way down the road, and Antiochus Epiphanes, way in the future. So, he's mystified, and he's intrigued because he knows this refers to his people the Jews. And so, he's wondering how all of this is going to play out, what it means. And he says in the middle of verse 15),

"And behold, there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. ¹⁶ And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, and it called, 'Gabriel, (So now we know who this one who had an appearance of a man was. We're talking, he's the angel Gabriel, and he calls out) Gabriel, make this man understand the vision."

And that's a little bit strong language. It's really more just explain to him some of the details related to this. Because even after this explanation, Daniel is still not going to completely understand it, but that's okay. He's going to explain in the sense of interpreting the types, and the visions, the images, which we've already done. So, we're going to go through this fairly quickly. Verse 17 says,

¹⁷ *"So he came near where I stood. (And that was enough for Daniel. He fell flat on his face. So much for this idea of angels looking like naked little babies with a bow and arrow flying around. This angel is so imposing. He walks up to Daniel and Daniel face plants, in front of this imposing, powerful, frightening angel,) '...But he said to me, 'Understand, O son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end.'"*

Now, can I stop you right there? I don't know if you underline in your Bible. Or maybe if you're just taking notes, this is a verse to underline because it is a key to understanding this chapter. It is a key verse to take note of, because this statement here helps you and me to understand that these prophetic visions extend beyond the period of Antiochus, as Gabriel says to the time of the end, listen.

Antiochus Epiphanes did not live at the time of the end. He's talking about the end of all things. And so, this is so important, and we are alerted to the fact here that this prophecy is going to go on to make reference to events beyond Antiochus Epiphanes into the far distant future that is still distant for you and me, by the way.

And some of you might be wondering if you've never run into this thing before. We've run into it many times in our studies through the Old Testament, but perhaps you haven't and you're wondering how one prophecy can refer to two events. How's that possible? How do you get two events out of one prophecy? Well, it's something we refer to as the law of double reference, and here's the definition on the screen.

The law of double reference is a tendency of Scripture prophecy to sometimes refer to two events or people simultaneously - one relevant to the general time of the prophecy and the other relating to the distant, far-off future.

We see this many times throughout Scripture, many times. There are even references in the old and New Testament that bring in the law of double reference. One of them has to do with the prophecy that is given to us at the very end of the book of Malachi. Do you remember what it says there?

It says that God is going to raise up someone who came before to do something very important, and that who's that person? It's Elijah. The Lord says, I will send Elijah before the great and dreadful Day of the Lord. Now you read into the Gospel accounts, and you hear Jesus having a conversation with His disciples about John the Baptist.

And Jesus says to His disciples, and if you're willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who is to come. But you see there's more to it than that, because we know that John wasn't Elijah because he was asked, are you Elijah? And John said, I am not. Now, what Gabriel said to his father, remember when Zechariah received his own vision of Gabriel? Zechariah was told, your son will be born to you and he will minister, he will go forth in the spirit and power of Elijah.

He didn't say, you're going to your wife's going to give birth and Elijah's coming back. He didn't say that. He said, your son will go forth in the power of Elijah. John said, I am not Elijah. What Jesus said was, if you're willing to accept it, he is the Elijah right? But we know that there is another reference. Or another coming of Elijah. Why? Because you go back to Malachi and what does it say? I will send you Elijah before the great and dreadful Day of the Lord.

John the Baptist did not come before the great and dreadful Day of the Lord. The first coming of Jesus was the time of grace and salvation where Jesus said, God has not sent His Son into the world to condemn the world but to save it. But when He comes a second time, it will be a time of judgment, and it will be a dreadful day. And that is when Elijah is to come again.

So, we see again this law of double reference. And again, that's just one example that I'm giving you here. Now the other thing that helps us to understand that this is the law of double reference related to Antiochus Epiphanes, who was a very cruel man and did what he did, and we know what he did, and the anti-Christ who Antiochus Epiphanes prefigures, is because of the great similarities between these two men and what they did, what one did and what the other will do.

For example, one persecuted the Jews and so will the other. One of them, Antiochus Epiphanes, killed the saints of God and so will the other. One Antiochus Epiphanes set up an image in the temple. In that case it was the image of Zeus, and we know that the anti-Christ will do the same. He'll set up an image in the temple, and anti-Christ Epiphanes demanded that the people worship him as God and the anti-Christ will do the same. Demand, the worship of the world.

So, we see these correlations, these parallel correlations between these two figures. One who is a prefiguring of the second. So, I want you to notice Daniel's reaction to Gabriel as he begins to speak to him. First, he fell on his face, but now he says in verse 18,

¹⁸ *"And when he had spoken to me, I fell into a deep sleep with my face to the ground. (That's a little bit rude to fall asleep while someone's talking to you, I suppose, but I think he's just, so, here's what's interesting about this. This is a vision. How can you fall asleep in a vision? How can you get down on your face in a vision? Do you understand why Paul in the New Testament said, "whether in the body or out of the body I do not know." It was so real. He wasn't sure. He said whether, and he even repeated it, whether in the body or out of the body. I don't know, God knows. Daniel is falling on his face in this vision*

before this angel. He's falling asleep in this vision. It's crazy. But he says,) *he touched me and made me stand up.*”

Verse 19, ¹⁹“*He said, “Behold, I will make known to you what shall be at the latter end of the indignation, for it refers to the appointed time of the end.”* (There it is again, that reference to the appointed time of the end. Now he's going to interpret the images of the vision that we've already done so, so we'll read through it quickly. Verse 20),

²⁰ “*As for the ram that you saw with the two horns, these are the kings of Media and Persia.* ²¹ *And the goat is the king of Greece. And the great horn between his eyes is the first king.* (That's Alexander the Great remember?) ²² *As for the horn that was broken, in place of which four others arose, four kingdoms shall arise from his nation, but not with his power.* (Those are the four generals that fought for power from Alexander's Kingdom. Verse 23),

²³ “*And at the latter end of their kingdom, when the transgressors have reached their limit,* (and those are the Jews that have fallen away from their covenant relationship with God. It says,) *a king of bold face, one who understands riddles, shall arise.*” (And again, the king of bold face, short-term, Antiochus Epiphanes, long-term, the anti-Christ, right? Verse 24),

²⁴ “*His power shall be great—but not by his own power;* (And this is very important because we know that from the book of Revelation, that the anti-Christ is going to be infused with literally the power of the enemy. So he will rise to power but not by his own power. And it says that, we're in the middle of verse 24,) *and he shall cause fearful destruction and shall succeed in what he does and destroy mighty men and the people who are the saints.*”

And as we pointed out last week, the saints, at least in the short term, refer to the Jews and during the great tribulation, when the anti-Christ will rise to power. The saints refers to those who come to Christ during the great tribulation, in other words those people we call the “tribulation saints,” who will be persecuted and martyred for their faith in Christ. Verse 25,

²⁵ “*By his cunning he shall make deceit prosper* (that's an interesting term) *under his hand, and in his own mind he shall become great. Without warning he shall destroy many. And he shall even rise up against the Prince of princes,* (and of course, referring to the anti-Christ that's the true Prince, which is Jesus) *and he shall be broken* (In other words, taken out) *—but by no human hand.*”

And again, this is a claim that it is through the power of God that Jesus Christ will literally overcome the anti-Christ at the end of the great tribulation. Verse 26 says,

²⁶ “The vision of the evenings and the mornings that has been told is true, but seal up the vision, for it refers to many days from now. (And then this chapter ends with this statement saying in verse 27) ²⁷ And I, Daniel, was overcome and lay sick for some days. Then I rose and went about the king's business, but I was appalled by the vision and did not understand it.”

Fascinating, isn't it that, Daniel was a tenderhearted man, and these visions really took their toll on him. We're going to find out that this was also the case as we get later into this book, but it affected him physically. He says he lay ill for several days and he, part of it had to do, I'm sure, with the fact that he still, even after the explanation was given, he didn't understand it.

Have you ever tried to put together a puzzle and some pieces were missing, and you found that out after he'd maybe worked hard? This puzzle is missing pieces. Well, depending on how big the puzzle is and how many pieces there are, you may still be able to get a pretty good idea of what the picture is, but in Daniel's case, he couldn't.

There were too many pieces of the puzzle that were missing for him, and he couldn't get a picture, he couldn't see what was going on, and it drove him to exhaustion. And as he was trying to figure these things out, and I make that point because I want you to understand the privilege that we have as believers today to have so many of these missing pieces put into place in the puzzle.

We can see some of them, well, we see some of them from the Bible. We have the Book of Revelation that adds to the book of Daniel and gives us greater dimension and insight concerning the anti-Christ. We have historical information to understand things that Daniel didn't know because they were yet future. We have so much insight from the Gospels and the writings. Daniel had no idea about the Church. He had no concept of the body of Christ. That was a mystery that God had not yet given, the Church is referred to as a mystery.

Now, when you and I think of a mystery, you pick up a book and you say, this is a mystery. What that means is there's something in the book that people don't know, and you have to wait till the end of the book. In the Bible, the word mystery means something that was previously unknown, but has now been revealed. Let me show you where Paul talks about it. It's in Ephesians chapter three, and he says,

Ephesians 3:4-6 (ESV)

When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed this holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁴ *When you read this, you can perceive my insight (and here it is) into the mystery of Christ,* ⁵ *which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed this holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. (And then he says,)* ⁶ *This mystery (here it is) is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.*

People, he's talking about the Church. The Church is this amalgamation of Jew and Gentile into one new man where Jew and Gentile is really even no longer applicable. It's the Church, it's the body of Christ. Listen, that's a mystery. It was a mystery for Daniel. He didn't, he knew nothing about it. So if he knew nothing about the church, you know that he knew nothing of the rapture, the catching away of the church. He knew nothing about the bride of Christ. He knew nothing.

Too many missing pieces, and he just didn't understand, and it just kind of, drove him to exhaustion. And so we're going to see more pieces given to Daniel. Unfortunately, it's not going to really help him a great deal, but as we go on, in, in further chapters, we'll see more information and insights. But you're going to, you're going to see here as we get into the next chapters that Daniel didn't just go about his business and stop thinking about this.

He started getting into prophetic writings. In fact, he got a hold of the writings of Jeremiah, and he's going to tell you here, when we study next, he's going to tell you, and I was reading in Jeremiah, the prophecies of Jeremiah, and I came across that passage. Oh, it's 70 years that we're going to be in Babylon and then we're going to be released.

And so he kept researching, he kept looking into these things. He kept trying to put pieces together so he could understand God's ultimate plan. And so we're going to read more about that as we continue on. So let's pray.

Father, I thank you so much. I thank you for Your Word. Oh Lord, I thank you for the revelation that you've given to us here in Daniel. I thank you that how it corresponds to the historical accounts that we read in any history book, and how

the book of Revelation gives greater depth of insight related to some of these things of the end. And I thank you, my Father God, that we live in this time of the end ourselves because you're preparing your Church, you're preparing your people for these days, which are the last days, the days of the end, the latter days.

And I thank you, Father God, for you are God of revelation and understanding, and we thank you that through your Spirit, you make our hearts and minds to lay hold of these things. And we confess once again, Lord God, that apart from you, we can't do that. But with you, we can walk in understanding and insight. Thank you for Your Word. Thank you for your goodness. Thank you for your love. We just relish our relationship with you through Jesus Christ. For it is in His Name that we worship, we study, and we pray these things, amen.