



Daniel 8

**A RAM...A GOAT...  
AND THE ANTICHRIST**

Wednesday, March 7, 2018

First Assembly of God  
Wednesday Night Bible Study

Pastor Dan Betzer

# THE PROPHECIES OF DANIEL STATESMAN FOR THE AGES

*Session Eight / Chapter Eight*  
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## A RAM...A GOAT...AND THE ANTICHRIST

1 We come tonight to one of the strangest, most chilling, and enlightening prophecies in  
2 God's Word, chapter 8 of Daniel. While this episode of the great prophet tells  
3 specifically of something ghastly about to happen to Israel a couple hundred years before  
4 Christ, it also refers to the dreadful time yet to come when Antichrist is given seven years  
5 of devastating liberty on Planet Earth. This chapter is not "easy," but marvelously  
6 rewarding. Let's begin.

7  
8 You will recall from last week that we learned the first six chapters of Daniel are almost  
9 purely historic, the last chapters are strongly prophetic. In chapter 7, Daniel recalled a  
10 vision he had received from God many years earlier, "...in the first year of Belshazzar,  
11 king of Babylon." In chapter 8, it is several years later and Daniel received another  
12 vision.

13  
14 Daniel 8:1-2

15 **In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, even**  
16 **unto me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first. [2] And I saw in a**  
17 **vision; and it came to pass, when I saw, that I was at Shushan in the palace, which is**  
18 **in the province of Elam; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai.**

19  
20 Shushan was one of the palaces of Babylon, located about 150 miles north of the Persian  
21 Gulf in Iran. In this vision, God is going to show Daniel several issues:

- 22 • The fall of Medo-Persia to Greece
- 23 • The battle between Judaism and Hellenism (Greek)
- 24 • The eventual rise of the Antichrist

### THE SETTING

25  
26  
27  
28 In Daniel 2, we studied the statue observed by King Nebuchadnezzar in his strange and  
29 frightening dream. He saw a massive figure with a head of gold, arms of silver, trunk of  
30 brass and legs of iron.

- 31 • the head of gold - Babylon

- 1 • the arms of silver - Medo-Persia
- 2 • the trunk of brass - Greece
- 3 • the legs of iron - Rome

4  
5

How did Greece overcome such a massive empire as Medo-Persia? And why should you even care? It's a story found not only in Scripture but in your history books as well. And it has vital bearing on our present planet immediately following the Rapture of the Church.

6  
7 Several hundred years after Daniels' death, the influence of Greek culture had already  
8 invaded Israel. In the trading centers such as Gaza, Joppa, Acre, Amman (Jordan - just  
9 45 miles east of Jerusalem), and Bet-Shan (which became known as Scythopolis) Greek  
10 influence was already strong. This was not done by force or military, it done by quiet  
11 sociological change. That would soon change. A monster was coming! And that  
12 monster is but the "prototype" of the one still to come!

13  
14 Daniel 8:3-8

15 **Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a**  
16 **ram which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher than**  
17 **the other, and the higher came up last. [4] I saw the ram pushing westward, and**  
18 **northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither was**  
19 **there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and**  
20 **became great. [5] And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west**  
21 **on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a**  
22 **notable horn between his eyes. [6] And he came to the ram that had two horns,**  
23 **which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his**  
24 **power. [7] And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler**  
25 **against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power**  
26 **in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped**  
27 **upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. [8]**  
28 **Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn**  
29 **was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven.**

30  
31 Let me tell you the story.

32  
33 The Jews in Israel were most unhappy with this cultural incursion into their country.  
34 This is true of followers of Jesus Christ in our United States today. There are insidious  
35 powers at work to change our national mores, our culture, our value system. They chip  
36 away at these values all the time, incessantly, mercilessly. And we who value the truth

1 of holy Scripture and the veracity of unvarnished American history are starting, I hope, to  
2 wake up to these pagan teachings. Obviously, we are not better off for them.

3  
4 The Babylonian Empire collapsed around 540 B.C. (See Daniel chapter 5.) That  
5 empire was followed by the Medo-Persian Empire (Daniel 5:31 **And Darius the**  
6 **Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old.**) The Medo-  
7 Persian Empire is the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy in:

8  
9 Daniel 8:3 **Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the**  
10 **river a ram which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher**  
11 **than the other, and the higher came up last.** The first horn was Media and the second  
12 was Persia - the Medo-Persian Empire.

13  
14 This empire would last for about 200 years. Then Daniel saw a "goat" coming eastward:

15  
16 Daniel 8:5-6

17 **And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the**  
18 **whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between**  
19 **his eyes. [6] And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing**  
20 **before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power.**

21  
22 Who was this angry, speeding goat creature? I believe it was Alexander the Great (the  
23 son of assassinated King Philip of Macedonia - Philippi was named for him, where Paul  
24 and Silas first brought the Gospel to Europe!)

25  
26 Alexander conquered old Palestine (Israel) in 334 BC but did not appear to mistreat the  
27 Jews still living there. The people of that area had already started being Hellenized  
28 (made to enjoy Greek culture), but now a Greek ruled them - Alexander. Alexander died  
29 very young, in his early 30's) in Babylon. Almost immediately his four generals began  
30 to fight about the takeover of Alexander's vast lands.

31  
32 Fast forward 150 years.

### 33 34 THE DREADFUL SILENT CENTURIES BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS

35  
36 Between the last book in the Old Testament, Malachi, and the first one we find in the  
37 New Testament, Matthew, 400 years passed. Theologians call them the "silent years"  
38 because there is no record of God every speaking to anyone. Yet history records some  
39 of the major developments of that time period:

- 1 ✓ Israel had returned (at least in part) to “the land” following the collapse of Babylon  
 2 and the edict of Cyrus (Medo-Persian) that they could be free once again.  
 3 Sometime in the 400's BC Jews began returning to Israel.  
 4
- 5 ✓ A temporary temple had been erected to replace the great one built by Solomon,  
 6 that was destroyed in the last attack on Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar's  
 7 Babylonian army - 586 B.C. The great Temple Jesus knew was erected by King  
 8 Herod later.  
 9
- 10 ✓ Under the Medes and Persians and then the early Greeks, Jews in Israel had a  
 11 reasonably secure time - lasting about 350 years.  
 12
- 13 ✓ We will take a bit of time with a monster named Antiochus in just a few moments.,  
 14 Under his tyranny the Jews suffered greatly.  
 15
- 16 ✓ The Roman Empire began midway through that four hundred year period between  
 17 the Testaments. Famous names such as Julius Caesar, Pompey and others  
 18 became the leaders of the known world. ROME WAS THE IDENTITY OF THE  
 19 LEGS OF IRON IN NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S VISION - DANIEL 2.  
 20

#### 21 ISRAEL'S PEOPLE BREAKING APART

22

23 During the 400 years, the royal line of David had fallen on evil days. There was no  
 24 Jewish king on the throne of Israel. The Jews comprised a puppet nation, under the  
 25 Persians and then Greece. However, although the people were plagued with sorts of  
 26 problems, they remained a united people. There were no political schisms or factions,  
 27 nor were they divided into groups or parties. But when we come to the book of  
 28 Matthew, it's a different picture altogether. The rise of the Pharisees, the Sadducees,  
 29 the Herodians and others formed during those dark 400 years when God left them to their  
 30 own will and skills.  
 31

32 As mentioned earlier, Alexander the Great drank himself to death in 323 B.C. in the  
 33 prime of his life and his four main generals attempted to rule his broken empire.  
 34 Remember, the Greeks were in power and had done all they could to Hellenize (make  
 35 Greek) the Jews of Israel.  
 36

37 The Hellenists, by the way, the Greek lovers, became the foundation for the rise of the  
 38 Sadducees, the liberals of their day. They turned away from the strict observance of  
 39 Jewish law and gave society a sloppy idea of who they were. This led to the coming of  
 40 “the monster....” Antiochus Epiphanes, the prototype of the yet-to-come Antichrist.

1 Now....let's pick up Daniels prophecy once again:

2  
3 Daniel 8:8-11

4 **Therefore the he goat (Greece) waxed very great: and when he was strong, the**  
5 **great horn was broken (Alexander died); and for it came up four notable ones (his**  
6 **generals) toward the four winds of heaven. [9] And out of one of them came forth a**  
7 **little horn (ANTIOCHUS), which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and**  
8 **toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. [10] And it waxed great, even to the**  
9 **host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and**  
10 **stamped upon them. [11] Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host,**  
11 **and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was**  
12 **cast down.**

13  
14 About 203 B.C. Antiochus arrived on the scene, capturing control over the Middle East.  
15 When he died, his brother took control - Antiochus Epiphanes. He gave himself that last  
16 name and it means "visible god." He claimed that he and Jupiter were one and the same.  
17 Many - under their breaths - called him Antiochus Epimanes - which means madman.

18  
19 His goal was to turn everyone to Greeks, if not by birth then by actions and desire. He  
20 prohibited the observance of the Sabbath and circumcision. A statue of Jupiter,  
21 resembling himself, was placed in the Jewish Temple. A pig, the most detested animal  
22 by Jews, was slaughtered on the Holy Altar. A Jewish woman caught with her  
23 circumcised baby boy had the child tied to her neck and she was thrown off the Temple  
24 walls. Judaism was declared illegal. Thousands of men, women and children let  
25 themselves be slaughtered rather than violate Judaism.

26  
27 Many of the Jews went over to Hellenism. Some of them were wealthy and aristocratic  
28 Jews who accepted Greek customs and dress, some even changing their names to Greek  
29 ones. They sent their children to Greek universities where they took part in Greek games  
30 in the nude. They turned in fellow Jews who refused Greek names and actions.

### 31 32 THE GREAT REVOLT LED BY THE MACCABEES

33  
34 Often, on my way to Jerusalem from the airport in Tel Aviv, we drive through the  
35 community of MODIN, located about 20 miles west of Jerusalem. 2100 years ago, the  
36 people who lived there were, for the most part, observant Jews. There lived a family  
37 there by the name of Hasmonians. The head of the family was the priestly leader of the  
38 town called Mattathias. He had five sons: Simon, Eliezer, Judah, Jonanan and Jonathan.

39  
40 Every time I drive through Modin, I get goose bumps thinking of what happened there





The modern-day community of Modin, where the Maccabees changed history 2100 years ago.

that changed the course of history. One day Greek and Syrian soldiers entered the Modin synagogue, dragging in a pig. They ordered the old priest Mattathias to sacrifice the pig to Jupiter in honor Antiochus. The honorable leader of the town's Jews refused to budge. Out of the crowd stepped a fancy-dressed Hellenized Jew who asked permission of the soldiers to perform the sacrifice. The Jews knew very well what would happen next. They would be required to eat part of the pig and those who refused would be killed on the spot.

Suddenly - everything happened so fast! Old Mattathias snatched the sword from the captain's hand and ran it through the body of the traitor. Then he swung the sword again, this time killing the Greek captain. The five sons of the old priest rushed forward to their father's aid and disarmed the other soldiers. Word raced through Modin and soon the synagogue was packed with observant Jews who in no time killed all the soldiers and the defiled altar was demolished.

The local Jews knew the die was cast. The war, long simmering, was now on! They knew a large armed force would soon arrive to avenge the deaths of the Greek soldiers. They took to the hills. The five sons went quickly to all the villages to recruit men willing to fight. They made up groups of 100 with a captain in charge of each group. Their armaments were lacking (not unlike the conquest of the Golan Heights in the Six Day War of 1967 when tanks were out of ammunition). Old Matthias cried out,

1 “Whoever is for God, let him come on to me!” His cry echoed across the Judean hills  
2 and were answered by multitudes of Jews will to die for their faith!

3  
4 Within a year, the old priest passed away. The leadership now fell on Judah. HE  
5 ACQUIRED THE NAME OF MACCABEE - derived from the Hebrew word  
6 “makkebet” which means “THE HAMMER.”

7  
8 Ere long, Judah and his band gained confidence, more arms, more soldiers. Even with  
9 his treasury almost gone, Judah pressed on. He and his men kept up a constant rain of  
10 arrows from hills overlooking the roads, until the enemy forces were compelled to march  
11 with shields over their heads. Still arrows found their mark and the roads became  
12 covered with the corpses of foreign soldiers. Judah’s men never gave them a peaceful  
13 night. A special Judaism dispensation was made: the Jews would even fight on Shabbat  
14 (Sabbath)!

15  
16 Antiochus was called away to crush a rebellion to the north and left General Lysias in  
17 charge. This man was not bright and he underestimated the Jewish forces, taking them  
18 on in the suburb of Jerusalem that Christians know so well - Emmaus (where Jesus  
19 walked with two of His disciples right after His resurrection). The Jewish forces  
20 soundly defeated Lysias and his men, which opened the road right into Jerusalem.

21  
22 Now the Greek/Syrian forces had to flee the Holy City along with the sympathetic-to-  
23 their-cause Hellenized Jews.

24  
25 Right away, the Maccabean soldiers, who were just simple farmers and townsfolk, who  
26 for their love of freedom had become soldiers, now dropped their swords and began to  
27 clean out the Temple of every bit of paganism. They ground the statues of Antiochus to  
28 dust and rededicated the Temple to the worship of God. This was the 25<sup>th</sup> of Kislev  
29 (December) 165 B.C. They rejoiced for eight days. This was the feast of Chanukah.

30  
31 This was the miracle of the oil so often told, when just a small amount miraculously was  
32 enough for the week.

33  
34 The neighboring people who had earlier assisted the Greek/Syrian forces with soldiers  
35 and money started to attack Jews living around them. The pagans of Joppa drowned 200  
36 faithful Jews. Other cities committed similar atrocities. Outside of Judea, Jews lived in  
37 fear. But Judah sent punitive expeditions to punish those cities that mistreated their  
38 Jewish inhabitants.

39  
40 Word of a large force of pagan soldiers advancing on Judea was received. With only



1 800 men, Judah went to meet another Syrian army. He died in battle and this ended for  
2 all intents and purposes the Maccabean revolt.

3  
4 Bear in mind....in a short time, THE ROMANS WOULD ARRIVE, and the iron legs of  
5 Nebuchadnezzar's vision would be a reality!

6  
7 Daniel 8:11-14

8 **Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily**  
9 **sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. [12] And an**  
10 **host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast**  
11 **down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered.**

12 **[13] Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain**  
13 **saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and**  
14 **the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden**  
15 **under foot? [14] And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days;**  
16 **then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.**

17  
18 Antiochus had desecrated the Temple in Jerusalem. (Verse 11) In his vision, Daniel  
19 heard some heavenly entity ask, "How long is this going on?" The response was 2300  
20 days. Somewhere between six and seven years. That correlates with the domination  
21 by the historical Greek madman, Antiochus, in the Holy Land.

22  
23 NOW WE ARE GOING TO LEARN FROM SCRIPTURE THAT DANIEL'S VISION  
24 HAD TO DO NOT ONLY WITH THE GRECIAN ERA OF ANTIOCHUS, BUT ITS  
25 FULLEST REVELATION IS **YET TO COME!**

26  
27 First, Daniel is shown the vision's meaning between the Old and New Testament, which  
28 we have already covered:

29  
30 Daniel 8:15-22

31 **And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the**  
32 **meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man. [16] And I**  
33 **heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel,**  
34 **make this man to understand the vision. [17] So he came near where I stood: and**  
35 **when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand,**  
36 **O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision. [18] Now as he was**  
37 **speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: but he**  
38 **touched me, and set me upright. [19] And he said, Behold, I will make thee know**  
39 **what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end**  
40 **shall be. [20] The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media**

1 **and Persia. [21] And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is**  
2 **between his eyes is the first king. [22] Now that being broken, whereas four stood up**  
3 **for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.**

4  
5 The heavenly person (the angel Gabriel) clearly identified the persons Daniel saw in his  
6 vision:

7 The Ram – Media/Persia kings

8 The rough Goat – Greece

9 The great Horn – Alexander the Great

10 The Little Horn – Antiochus Epiphanes

11  
12 Keep in mind that Antiochus is a prototype of the coming Antichrist.

13  
14 Daniel 8:23-25

15 **And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the**  
16 **full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.**  
17 **[24] And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy**  
18 **wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the**  
19 **holy people. [25] And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his**  
20 **hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he**  
21 **shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without**  
22 **hand.**

23  
24 I believe “the latter time” lies just ahead of us as the wickedness of mankind intensifies  
25 (“when transgressors are come to the full”). 2 Tim. 3:13 **But evil men and seducers**  
26 **shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.** Daniel’s prophecy of the  
27 coming Antichrist could be fulfilled soon - but first Jesus will come.

28  
29 Daniel calls Antichrist (verse 23) the king of fierce countenance and dark sentences.  
30 Everything about him will be evil. Rev. 13:7 **And it was given unto him to make**  
31 **war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all**  
32 **kindreds, and tongues, and nations.** His power will be global.

33  
34 His own power is vast; however, he is really empowered by someone else, and that  
35 someone is Satan. Daniel sees four characteristics and actions of Antichrist:

36  
37 1. He will bring prosperity to his followers. (Seems we hear that theme a lot on  
38 media.) Rev. 13:17 **And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark,**  
39 **or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.** Antichrist will control the  
40 economy.

1 2. He will certainly “toot his own horn!” Rev. 13:5 **And there was given unto him**  
2 **a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to**  
3 **continue forty and two months.** Antichrist is the spawn of Satan (at least in spirit and  
4 deed) and we remember that pride was the downfall of Lucifer in the beginning.

5  
6 3. “By peace he shall destroy many.” In Revelation 6 he is the rider on the white horse  
7 (symbolizing peace). He comes with a bow, but no arrows. And he is followed  
8 immediately by the second rider n the red horse of war! What a deceiver Antichrist will  
9 be!

10  
11 4. “He shall stand up against the Prince of princes.” That’s Jesus Christ! Daniel 8:25  
12 is a glorious promise: “He shall be broken....”

13  
14 Now Daniel is given a hint as to the timing of this:

15  
16 Daniel 8:26-27 **And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is**  
17 **true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days. [27] And I**  
18 **Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's**  
19 **business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it.**

20  
21 The vision would not be fulfilled in Daniel’s lifetime. But the vision of the coming  
22 Antichrist was so shaking that Daniel fainted and was sick for a long time.

23  
24 May the realization of eternity and end-time prophecy always be a part of our knowledge  
25 from the Word. We don’t know WHEN it will happen; we know only that it WILL  
26 happen!

27  
28  
29 Next week: Daniel’s fantastic vision of the 70 weeks!