

The Gospel, 1844, and Judgment

Daniel 8

Lesson #5 for July 29, 2006

Scriptures: Daniel 8

1. In Daniel 8 we come across the third major vision in the book of Daniel. Why do you think God chose to use visions and then later explanations instead of telling Daniel directly what he had in mind?
2. Which parts of these visions are hard to understand? For Daniel? For us?
3. By reading and comparing carefully we note that Daniel 2, Daniel 7, and now Daniel 8 began in ancient times some 500 or 600 years before Christ and continue down to the time of the end, specifically, to the second coming of Jesus Christ, when God establishes his own kingdom which will last forever. While Daniel 2 and 7 describe this as the establishment of God's Kingdom, Daniel 8 specifically says in Daniel 8:17 it will go up to "the time of the end". For those who take God's words seriously, there's no way to limit these prophecies to some second century B.C. events as many want to do!
4. Daniel 8 is different from Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 in that only a partial explanation is given of the vision immediately. It is not until some time later that a further explanation is given. Why do you think this is?
5. Let us review briefly the details of this vision. Daniel saw first a ram with two horns, one longer and newer, moving west, north, and south. It was described as powerful and grew arrogant. Then came a goat, moving very rapidly, with one prominent horn. It acted angry and smashed the ram, trampling on him. But at the height of his power that prominent horn was broken and four horns grew up in its place pointing in different directions. Sometime later, a "small horn" grew out of one of these horns. It moved with greater power toward the south, east, and toward "the promised land". Later, this horn focused his attention upward and attacked "the army of heaven" and even "the stars". Some of them were thrown to the ground and trampled. This "little horn" defied the prince of the heavenly army; he stopped the daily sacrifices; ruined the temple, and caused people to sin by not offering proper sacrifices. True religion was thrown to the ground. This little horn was successful in all that it did. Can we clearly identify this "little horn"? Is it the same as the "little horn" of Daniel 7?
6. Daniel's response came in the form of questions: How long will this awful sin replace the daily sacrifices. How long will the army of heaven and the temple be trampled? And an answer was given: 2300 evenings-mornings.
7. "In an attempt to make this period roughly conform to the three years of the devastation of the Temple by Antiochus IV, some have ingeniously assigned to the expression '2300 evening-mornings' only 1150 literal days.
"Concerning this, Keil has remarked that the prophetic period of the 2300 evening-mornings cannot be understood as "2300 half days or 1150 whole days, because evening and morning at creation constituted not the half but the whole day." After quoting the foregoing statement, Edward Young says, "Hence, we must understand the phrase as meaning 2300 days" (*The Prophecy of Daniel*, p. 174).
"Commentators have tried, but without success, to find some event in history that would fit a period of 2300 literal days. As Wright observes, "All efforts, however, to harmonize the period, whether expounded as 2300 days or as 1150 days, with any

precise historical epoch mentioned in the Books of the Maccabees or in Josephus have proved futile. ...Professor Driver is justified in stating, 'It seems impossible to find two events separated by 2300 days (=6 years and 4 months) which would correspond with the description'" (Charles H. H. Wright, *Daniel and His Prophecies*, 1906, pp. 186,187). The only way that consistency can be given to these "days" is to apply them in a prophetic sense by the application of the year-day principle." (*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Daniel 8:14)

8. Twice Daniel is told that this prophecy will extend until the time of the end. (Daniel 8:17,19)
9. The angel goes on to tell Daniel that the ram represents Medo-Persia and the goat represents Greece. (Daniel 8:22,21) Then the angel speaks about the little horn and finally says that the sanctuary will be cleansed. **So we see that in this prophecy or vision we have the following outline: Medo-Persia; Greece; a little horn; sanctuary cleansed.**
10. Is it possible to positively link Daniel 2, 7, and 8? *By putting them side-by-side is it possible to identify more of the individual kingdoms involved? More of the events involved?*
11. Two major interpretations of the little horn have been suggested down through the years. Note, first of all, that the characteristics of this little horn do not exactly match the little horn in Daniel 7. This little horn is both religious and political in nature. The "pre-advent judgment" discussed in Daniel 7 seems to parallel the "cleansing of the sanctuary" in Daniel 8. While the cleansing of the sanctuary appears to take place at the "time of the end"—it occurs before the establishment of God's eternal kingdom. This cleansing of the sanctuary/pre-advent judgment seems to precede the second coming of Jesus Christ.
12. Note that Daniel 8 leaves the kingdom of Babylon out. Why do you think this is? Wouldn't it be more obvious that there is a parallel between this prophecy and the others if Babylon had been included?
13. Shortly after conquering Babylon, the kingdom of Medo-Persia was successful in conquering areas of Asia minor and Armenia to the north, Syria to the west and parts of Egypt and Ethiopia in the south.
14. Look at the chart of Daniel 2, 7, and 8 on page 4. What evidence is there to suggest that the little horn of Daniel 8 is the same as the legs of iron (Daniel 2) and the terrible beast (Daniel 7)? **This power comes up after Greece in Daniel 8 and extends to the time of the end, when it is supernaturally destroyed. What power fits this description?**
15. Look at the descriptive words of these three kingdoms in a row. Medo-Persia is described as **great** (Daniel 8:4). Greece is depicted as **very great** (Daniel 8:8); by contrast the little horn is depicted as **exceedingly great** (Daniel 8:9). This obvious progression suggests that Greece was more powerful than Medo-Persia and that the kingdom to come after Greece was more powerful than Greece. **There's only one kingdom that could fit this description. Furthermore, this power exists in one form or another—political or religious—until the end of the world.**
16. In Daniel 2 we demonstrated why we believe the legs of iron represent Rome. In Daniel 7 we talked about why we believe the fierce beast with iron-like teeth represented Rome. This little horn in Daniel 8 seems to parallel those two. Note once again that the angel does not specifically name this new power as "the little horn" but provides a description of its work (Daniel 8:9-12, 23-25). What are the characteristics of the "little horn"?
17. Does Antiochus IV Epiphanes fit the description of this "little horn"? Antiochus IV Epiphanes

arose as a weak leader following Antiochus III the Great in 168 B.C. He ruled for about 3 ½ years and tried to force the Jews to accept Hellenization—that is—transforming their society into a typical Greek society. Surely, Antiochus IV Epiphanes with his weakened powers being faced down by the Romans does not qualify as the exceeding great power described here! While others would believe that Rome with its destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70 is the full and complete fulfillment of this prophecy, political or pagan Rome does not exist to the end of the world.

18. What specifically is the little horn described as doing in a religious sense? What does he do to “take away the daily” and “cast down the sanctuary”? Papal Rome has displaced Christ as our high priest and mediator replacing him with human priests. Through the mass the Roman Catholic Church claims to crucify afresh the body of Christ, each time literally making his body a part of the wafer that they partake. Thus they set aside his ministry in heaven. Furthermore, by confessing sins to human priests, and even at times forgiving sins for the payment of penance, the church has taken over Christ’s and God’s role as the only one who can forgive sins.
19. Notice once again that as a change came in the power of Rome—in Daniel 2 and again in Daniel 7—so also in Daniel 8 when the little horn seems to shift its emphasis from political and military earthly pursuits to religious and heavenly pursuits. At first the little horn seems to move horizontally across the face of the earth, but later is depicted as moving vertically heavenward in an attack on “the host of heaven” and on “the Prince of the host” and the stars.
20. In what sense does the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8 and God’s judgment in Daniel 7 finally lead to the destruction of this false challenge in the form of a little horn power? *How does an event taking place in heaven lead to the destruction of this power and its ultimate eradication?*
21. What words are used to describe the final demise of this little horn? (Daniel 8:25). *What supernatural event will lead to the final destruction of this little horn? Does this help us to understand something about the cleansing of the sanctuary?*
22. *While we have not spoken extensively yet about the sanctuary, does it seem so far that the sanctuary is a heavenly sanctuary or an earthly one? Would God describe the cleansing of the sanctuary as a supernatural event if he was talking about the work of the Maccabees in chasing out the forces of Antiochus IV Epiphanes?*
23. What is implied by Daniel 8:26, NIV: “The vision of the evenings and mornings that has been given you is true, but seal up the vision, for it concerns the distant future.” What would qualify as the distant future?
24. Compare the chart for Thursday with the chart for Monday. What parallels can you find between the judgment in heaven in Daniel 7 and the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8?
25. ***After giving all of this material why did God tell Daniel to shut up the book and to seal the prophecy? (Daniel 8:26) Is the prophecy shut up and sealed because it takes a considerable amount of careful diligent Bible study to come up with the correct meaning? Is it sealed because it would be difficult to understand the prophecy until the major events involved have actually taken place? Does God intend for it to be still sealed in our day?***
26. We noted that the “pre-advent judgment” in Daniel 7 occurs after the 3 ½ years or 1260

prophetic days/years described in Daniel 7. If the “cleansing of the sanctuary” in Daniel 8 is parallel to this event, it must therefore come after the 1260 years and occur just before the second coming of Christ. *What time period is being described here?*

27. Why do you think so many modern scholars reject the historical approach to understanding these prophecies? Why do they want to reject the accuracy of the prophecies made by God through Daniel? If we accept the historical accuracy of Daniel are we forced to accept the pre-advent judgment as beginning in 1844? We will see that virtually everyone agrees that the 70 week (490 day) prophecy equals 490 years, because there is no other way to explain the events. So why do they try to make the 2300 days literal, instead of 2300 years?

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<i>Parallels between Daniel's Three Main Prophecies</i>			
Identification	Daniel 2	Daniel 7	Daniel 8
Babylon (Dan. 2:38,39)	Gold	Lion	Not represented
Medo-Persia (Dan. 8:20)	Silver	Bear	Ram
Greece (Dan. 8:21)	Bronze	Leopard	Goat
Divisions of Greece	Not represented	4 heads and wings	4 horns
Rome, Imperial	Iron	4 th beast	Little horn, phase 1
Divisions	Iron and clay	10 horns	Not represented
Rome, Papal	Not represented	Little horn	Little horn, phase 2
Pre-advent judgment	Not represented	Heavenly court scene, Ancient of days	Cleansing of the sanctuary at the end of the 2300 days
Kingdom of God	Stone kingdom	Saints of Most High ruled by Son of man	Not represented