

Daniel

From Contamination to Purification

Lesson #9 for February 29, 2020

Scriptures: Daniel 8; Daniel 2:38; Genesis 11:4; Leviticus 16; Hebrews 9:23-28; 10:1-4,11,15-18.

1. The vision recorded in Daniel 8 was given to Daniel in the third year of Belshazzar's reign which would be 548/547 B.C. In this lesson we will see how this vision relates to the visions of Daniel 2 and Daniel 7; next week we will see how Daniel 9 fits.
2. **The focus in Daniel 8 is on the sanctuary.** What we know about the sanctuary comes from our understanding of the earthly sanctuary; but, we believe this prophecy is talking about the heavenly sanctuary.
3. Assuming as we do that Daniel 8 and Daniel 7 are closely parallel, that would suggest that the purification of the heavenly sanctuary as seen in Daniel 8 corresponds to the judgment scene in Daniel 7.
4. Read Daniel 8 in its entirety. If you compare versions, you will notice that there is considerable variation in some of the translations. It is important for us to notice that whereas in Daniel 2 the head of gold is clearly identified as Babylon, (Daniel 2:38) in Daniel 8 we have the ram and the goat identified as Media-Persia (Daniel 8:20) and Greece. (Daniel 8:21) Since these three visions appear to be parallel, we now are able to name three of the four beasts or different metals in these visions.
5. It is interesting to notice that the symbolism used in this chapter involves a ram and a goat. Those are the two animals used in the ceremonies on the Day of Atonement described in Leviticus 16. Was this association intentional?
6. The details of these visions are very important. We know that the Media-Persian Empire expanded by conquering Lydia, a kingdom in western Turkey, Babylon, and Egypt in the south. These are exactly the directions mentioned in Daniel 8:4.
7. Read Daniel 8:21. History records that Alexander the Great conquered much of the civilized world in a very short period of time. Then, he died, and his very young son was murdered; the kingdom was divided between his four generals, each taking a portion.

Daniel 8:8-9: ⁸Therefore the male goat grew very great; but when he became strong, the large horn was broken, and in place of it four notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven. ⁹ And out of one of them came a little horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Glorious Land.—*The New King James Version*.^{*} (1982). (Daniel 8:8-9). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.[†]

8. What do we know about the little horns found in Daniel 7 and Daniel 8? Should they be considered as referring to the same power?
9. The *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*^{*} for Monday says:

After depicting four horns spreading to the four winds of heaven, the biblical text says that from one arose a little horn. **The question here is whether this horn or power comes from one of the four horns, which, as we saw yesterday, represent the four generals of Alexander-or one of the four winds. The grammatical structure of the text in the original language indicates that**

this horn comes from one of the four winds of heaven. And since this power arises after the Grecian Empire and its four offshoots, a common understanding is that this horn is Rome, first pagan and then papal.

“This little horn represents Rome in both its phases, pagan and papal. Daniel saw Rome first in its pagan, imperial phase, warring against the Jewish people and the early Christians, and then in its papal phase, continuing down to our own day and into the future.”—*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 841.—[as quoted in *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Monday, February 24].^{††}

10. **History confirms that, as stated in Daniel 8:9, the Roman Empire expanded greatly to the east, to the south, and toward the “Glorious Land,” that is, Palestine.**
11. In Daniel 7 we noted that the little horn arises out of that fourth terrifying beast which we have identified as pagan Rome. By contrast, the little horn in Daniel 8 comes out of one of the quadrants of the compass, that is from the west. As we have noticed, many of our Christian friends believe that the little horn in Daniel 8 represents Antiochus IV, a Seleucid king who was a part of the Grecian Empire. So, what evidence do we look at in trying to determine who this little horn refers to?

As the little horn becomes the main player in the vision, its vertical expansion receives detailed attention. In this regard, the horn corresponds closely to the little horn of Daniel 7, as the following comparison shows:

- (1) Both horns are little in the beginning (*Dan. 7:8, 8:9*).
- (2) Both become great later on (*Dan. 7:20, 8:9*).
- (3) Both are persecuting powers (*Dan. 7:21, 25; 8:10, 24*).
- (4) Both are self-exalting and blasphemous (*Dan. 7:8, 20, 25; 8:10, 11, 25*).
- (5) Both target God’s people (*Dan. 7:25, 8:24*).
- (6) Both have aspects of their activity that are delineated by prophetic time (*Dan. 7:25; 8:13, 14*).
- (7) Both extend until the time of the end (*Dan. 7:25, 26; 8:17, 19*).
- (8) And both face supernatural destruction (*Dan. 7:11, 26; 8:25*).

Last, because the little horn of Daniel 7 represents the papacy, the vertical expansion of the little horn in Daniel 8 must represent the same power. Thus, as in Daniel 2 and 7, the final main power is Rome, both pagan and papal.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide for Monday, February 24.^{†§} (See also the handout at www.Theox.org: “Rome or Antiochus?”)**

12. Read Daniel 8:10-12. In these verses we see some of the things that the little horn has done to try to show itself equal to God. Both pagan Rome and papal Rome murdered thousands of Christians. But, as we will see, the little horn then turned its attention to the sanctuary in heaven and tried to duplicate or change that system.
13. Daniel 8:11 talks about the daily sacrifice. This earthly type represented Christ’s intercessory ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. The Roman Catholic Church claims that they have exchanged this intercession of Christ to the intercession of priests.

“And he cast truth down to the ground. He did all this and prospered” (*Dan. 8:12, NKJV*). Jesus declares Himself to be the truth (*John 14:6*) and also points to the Word of God as truth (*John 17:17*). In contrast, the papacy prohibited the translation of the Bible into the language of the people, put the interpretation of the Bible under the authority of the church, and placed tradition, alongside the Bible, in theory, but, in practice, tradition is placed above the Bible as the supreme rule of faith.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Tuesday, February 25.[§]

14. What do you think the Old Testament sanctuary and its services were intended to teach the people of that day? Why did God think it was important to talk about the three areas of the temple: The courtyard, the holy place, and the most holy place? Can we explain those things in the context of the great controversy and what went wrong in God’s universe? What took place in the courtyard represents the removal of guilt and sin from the sinner’s life. The work in the “holy place” represents God’s way of dealing with sin’s power. And, finally, the work in the “most holy place” deals with sin’s responsibility. Who is responsible? And who is going to take care of it? Ultimately then, the question would be: How does God deal with guilt, forgiveness, sin’s power over us, and responsibility for the occurrence and presence of sin?
Daniel 8:14: He said to me, “For 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the holy place will be properly restored.”—*New American Standard Bible.**
15. Where is the holy place that is mentioned in this verse located? When comparing Daniel 7:9-14, we discover that the judgment is taking place in the sanctuary in heaven. Thus, we conclude that Daniel 8 is also talking about the sanctuary in heaven.
16. In the earthly sanctuary on the Day of Atonement, the sins of the Hebrew people that had been, in symbol, taken to the sanctuary each day, were carried by the high priest out of the most holy place and placed on the head of the scapegoat. That animal was then led far into the desert to die. In effect, that represented the elimination of sins from the camp.
17. What are the special challenges in understanding this Seventh-day Adventist doctrine? First of all, when talking about the heavenly sanctuary, we have no direct, primary evidence. No human being has been there to inspect the heavenly temple and come back to explain it to us. All we have is the earthly sanctuary which we have been told was patterned after the heavenly. But, Hebrews 10 repeatedly reminds us that the earthly is nothing more than a faint shadow of what God is really doing. It would be a terrible mistake to assume that our feeble understanding of the earthly sanctuary is a correct and complete understanding of God’s heavenly sanctuary and all that is happening there!
18. For example, is there anything in the heavenly sanctuary that really gets “dirty”? Does it really need to be cleansed? Is God moving sins around in heaven? How does this fit with other texts in Scripture about God’s dealing with sin? Viewed from one perspective, Daniel 2 tells us that God is the ultimate King of all. When all earthly kingdoms are ground to powder, God will reign forever. By contrast, Daniel 7 might be described as the mixed-up results of Satan’s pushing human power and politics to an extreme. And we might think of the little horn as a human manifestation of the Devil’s power from beneath trying to subtly control and eliminate God’s influence on this earth. How successful has he been? Compare the beast and the dragon in Revelation 13. Finally, in this scenario, God helps His people not by engaging the little horn directly, but by judgment (revealing the truth), vindicating or setting right His people. Read Hebrews 9:23-28; 10:1-4, 11, 15-18.
19. In the symbolism of the ancient Jewish tabernacle service, sins were transferred from: (1) the

sinner, (2) to the lamb, (3) to the priest, (4) to the tabernacle, and then (5) on the Day of Atonement back onto the priest, and (6) onto the scapegoat which was led away into the wilderness. **Thus, the sins were symbolically removed from the people of Israel forever.** What has God said through the New Testament book of Hebrews about this process? See Hebrews 10:1-4, 11, 15-18. The Old Testament system was never the final answer to the sin problem.

The sanctuary in heaven is the very center of Christ's work in behalf of men. It concerns every soul living upon the earth. It opens to view the plan of redemption, bringing us down to the very close of time, and revealing the triumphant issue of the contest between righteousness and sin. It is of the utmost importance that all should thoroughly investigate these subjects, and be able to give an answer to every one that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them. [1 Peter 3:15] The subject of the sanctuary was the key which unlocked the mystery of the disappointment of 1844. It opened to view a complete system of truth, connected and harmonious, showing that God's hand had directed the great advent movement.—Ellen G. White, *Evangelism** 222.1-2.†

20. In our discussion of the sanctuary and its details, we must recognize that Seventh-day Adventists are the only group that understand the ancient Hebrew sanctuary and its interpretation in the book of Hebrews in this way. Unfortunately, the details and their interpretation have been vigorously discussed and disagreed upon even in the Adventist Church.

If a man, holding a belief which he was taught in childhood or persuaded of afterwards, keeps down and pushes away any doubts which arise about it in his mind, purposely avoids the reading of books and the company of men that call in question or discuss it, and regards as impious those questions which cannot easily be asked without disturbing it—the life of that man is one long sin against mankind. *William Clifford, 19th century British philisopher.*

<https://www.coursehero.com/file/p4f5kvn/His-argument-is-that-the-way-beliefs-are-supported-is-a-moral-concern-because/>

21. Notice Ellen White's comments:

Those who cannot impartially examine the evidences of a position that differs from theirs, are not fit to teach in any department of God's cause.—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*,* February 18, 1890, par. 13; *2RH** 368:1:3; *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials** 534.3; *1SM** 411.

Daniel 8:13: Then I heard one angel ask another, "How long will these things that were seen in the vision continue? How long will an awful sin replace the daily sacrifices? How long will the army of heaven and the Temple be trampled on?"—*Good News Bible*.*

To the question "How long shall be the vision" (ram [Media-Persia], goat [Greece], and the little horn and its actions [Rome, pagan and papal]), the other heavenly being replied: "For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed" (*Dan. 8:14, NKJV*). As has already been noted, this period is so long because it begins during the time of the Medo-Persian Empire and extends through the timing of the Greek Empire and pagan and papal Rome, thousands of years. According to the historicist method of interpretation (see lesson 1), this prophetic period should be calculated on the basis of the year-day principle, which means that the 2,300 evenings and

mornings correspond to a time span of 2,300 years. Otherwise, the 2,300 days would amount to a bit more than just six years, an impossibly short time for all the events of the vision. **Hence, the year-day principle must be in effect.**—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Thursday, February 27. [All content and formatting in this paragraph are in the source except the bold type.]^{†‡§}

22. There is no evidence in Daniel 8 to help us identify the beginning or the ending of this prophecy. However, Daniel 9, our next study, will solve that problem. This is the longest time prophecy in the Bible. It is 2300 years!
23. It is clear that Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, pagan Rome, and papal Rome line up timewise. Is that sufficient reason to conclude that the judgment in heaven described in Daniel 7 is parallel to the cleansing of the sanctuary described in Daniel 8?
24. The history of our world is depicted as violent in Daniel 2, 7, and 8. Animals are injuring and trampling on each other. A little horn power arises with violence and persecution. The Scripture does not pretend that there will be no suffering for God's people in this world. Should this help us to be patient despite problems which might arise because of the reality of the evil we see all around us? What is our world like today?
25. As we have seen, this lesson covers the story of the two little horns (Daniel 7 & 8) and the Day of Atonement. How does this affect us individually in our Christian lives? The good news of the sanctuary in the Old Testament was that a person's sins could be sent away on the head of the scapegoat. So, how does that fit with our understanding of the gospel in New Testament times? We believe that the judgment in heaven is the ultimate solution to the sin problem. **But, we must be honest enough to recognize that our understanding of these passages is not agreed to by any of our Christian friends.** Does that bother you?
26. Does understanding the great controversy over God's character and government as we do bring assurance to you? By the use of this paradigm, are you able to address all the important questions which come to mind as you read the Bible? Do we have solid, defensible evidence for our beliefs? While it is important to raise serious questions and to carefully evaluate the evidence, let us not promote an atmosphere of doubt and skepticism. And please, let us not destroy our core beliefs over minor differences in interpretation.

The heavenly being [angel] clearly states what will happen when this long period ends: namely, the cleansing of the sanctuary. In the Israelite cultic calendar, there was a special day assigned for the purification of the sanctuary—the Day of Atonement. On such occasions the tabernacle was purified (*taher*) from the sins of God's people. Daniel 8 mentions a time for the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary. Such action is conveyed by the verb *nitsdaq*, which means to be restored, cleansed, and vindicated. So, the main ideas conveyed by this verb are that (1) the sanctuary must be cleansed from the sins of God's people. (2) God's intercessory ministry in the heavenly sanctuary must be restored. (3) God must be vindicated from the profanation of His sanctuary. The papal system introduced distortions to the plan of salvation and usurped Christ's intercessory work by means of the sacrament of the mass, the penance, and absolution of sins by human priests. From the information given in Daniel 9:23-27, we can determine that the year 457 B.C. marked the beginning of this prophetic period of 2,300 years. Therefore, the end of this prophetic period must be in A.D. 1844.—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 122.^{‡§}

27. How do you feel about the development in our world today where there are two polarized groups: (1) One emphasizing the apocalyptic events which they see as coming soon to our world, leading to the second coming of Jesus Christ; and (2) the other including much of generation X and generation Y who could not care less? Where would you place yourself in the continuum between these two extremes? Is this relevant to our generation? How can we help others including those in generation X and Y to understand the significance of this?
28. Many Seventh-day Adventists do not know a great deal about the Roman Catholic system. How do you feel about the idea that the papacy is trying to distort and replace God's worship system?

While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among God's people upon earth.—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy** 425.1.

29. God's judgment is conducted with millions of beings looking on. (Daniel 7:9-10) And although the Gospel of John suggests that judgment is placed in the hands of the Son, (John 5:22) he also says in John 3:17-21 and John 12:47-48 that we will be judged by the truth. God presents all the evidence in a form that appeals to our reason. But, there seems to be quite a movement among Adventists to turn away from reason and evidence. Could that be the Devil directly at work among us? And God will be able to call all things finished, not when He arbitrarily sets the date and posts a list of those who will be saved, but when God can turn to the entire universe and ask, "Are there any more questions?" And the answer will be: "None! Everything is clear."
30. God's government is completely transparent. The entire universe must eventually see that God is right and that everything He does is for the good of us and all of His other creatures. So, the great controversy comes to an end only when everyone in the universe, including Satan himself, agrees that God is right. (See Philippians 2:10-11.)
31. Many major corporations in our world today have been investigated because of apparently shady or even downright deceitful bookkeeping. So, how does God conduct His affairs? His books are wide-open, and He gives plenty of time for anyone to investigate and ask questions. How refreshing! Those who really want to know the truth will see it clearly. Furthermore, at the end, God will go through this process three different times to make sure everyone who has ever lived and who has significant questions will have them answered.
32. How does God go about fixing what has gone wrong? By revealing the truth about Himself and waiting for us to respond. And if we are willing to give God the opportunity to capture our attention, then, gradually and almost imperceptibly through the power and working of the Holy Spirit, our lives are transformed. This could never happen in one magical "Aha! moment." It is a long process of growth and healing. So, God wins not just on the universe-wide scale but also He wins in our individual lives and hearts because we really want to be like Him.
33. If you were asked by a friend to explain the most important texts in the Bible which support Seventh-day Adventist thinking—such as Daniel 8:14; Revelation 12:17; 14:6-12; and 19:10—when you had finished, would it be clear to them why we believe what we believe? We must remember that God asked humans just out of slavery in Egypt to establish and build a sanctuary so that He could dwell among them and us. (Exodus 25:8)

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