# Daniel 8 – Of Rams, Goats and Horns

As most of you remember, back in January Amy traveled to Spain to work with the children of kingdom workers who are serving in a restricted access country. While she didn’t depart until January 6th, her packing started in mid-December. Amy is a list maker. Anything she plans has lists. Going to visit her parents in Edmore has a list. Going shopping has a list. This is the way she does such an excellent job of keeping life organized amidst the chaos of three kids. Her lists included craft supplies and clothes, snacks for the airplane and gifts for the workers, a Bible to read and Bible tracts to give away, and it included airline tickets and her passport. I think she rewrote the list several times and checked it often. If she thought of something important while out driving, she wrote it down, so she would remember it and at times found that when she got home those things were already on her list.

For any international traveler, the most important thing they can have is their passport. If you are in a foreign country and have legal trouble, get sick, lose your airline tickets, or just generally need help, you can take your passport to the consulate or embassy and get help. If someone questions your status in the country, your stamped passport proves your legal status. A passport can be so important that a stolen passport can sell for over $13,000.

If you are overseas and lose your passport or have it stolen, getting it back can take time. This process is accelerated if they can see a photocopy of the original passport as it puts information they need in the right place to look it up. So when Amy packed, I made copies of her passport and put one in each of her bags as well as her carry on. For any trip, space in the luggage is limited, so you only pack what you need. But if something is really important, you may use the space to bring extras to make sure you have what you need.

In comparison to all of history, the Bible is a very short book. Space is at a premium, so if God chose to put something in scripture, it is important. If God chooses to repeat something, that should emphasize the truth and importance of what is repeated. In revealing the history of the world to Daniel, God uses most of Chapters 2 and 7 to reveal an outline of history. Then in chapters 8-11 He focuses in on certain portions of this history.

Today, as we focus on Daniel 8, we see a reemphasis of this prophecy, with a focus today on the Medo-Persian and Macedonian-Greek empires. We will see that God emphasizes details that Daniel could not possibly know in advance and that while the coming end-times ruler will be terrible and powerful, God will still control the future.

We will see the location on the banks of the Ulai, the Ram, the Goat, the Fourth Horn, and then ask the question, So, what about you.

## Location: Banks of the Ulai Daniel 8:1-2,15-19

“**1** ¶ In the third year of the reign of Belshazzar the king a vision appeared to me, Daniel, subsequent to the one which appeared to me previously. **2** I looked in the vision, and while I was looking I was in the citadel of Susa, which is in the province of Elam; and I looked in the vision and I myself was beside the Ulai Canal.

**15** ¶ When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it; and behold, standing before me was one who looked like a man. **16** And I heard the voice of a man between the banks of Ulai, and he called out and said, "Gabriel, give this man an understanding of the vision." **17** So he came near to where I was standing, and when he came I was frightened and fell on my face; but he said to me, "Son of man, understand that the vision pertains to the time of the end." **18** Now while he was talking with me, I sank into a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me and made me stand upright. **19** He said, "Behold, I am going to let you know what will occur at the final period of the indignation, for it pertains to the appointed time of the end.

Daniel has this vision during the third year of the reign of Belshazzar. As we saw in the past, Nabonidus was the king, but let his son Belshazzar rule on his behalf, hence Belshazzar’s offer to make Daniel the third highest ruler of the kingdom. This takes place in Belshazzar’s third year, which means it was months, weeks or possibly even days before Belshazzar saw the handwriting on the wall.

In his vision, he finds himself in Susa, a city that about 70 years later would be the new capital of the Medo-Persian empire and the place where the book of Esther takes place. Daniel had no way of knowing the future significance of Susa. At this time, it was barely being rebuilt from its destruction during the overthrow of the kingdom of Elam. This city, which is now called Shush in the country of Iran, would later be conquered by Alexander the Great who, in an effort to unite the kingdoms, required 10,000 Macedonian soldiers to marry Persian women from the noble families. A plan that backfired when most of the marriages ended in divorce immediately after Alexander’s death.

Two major rivers flow near Susa, normally only merging during the flood season. To enhance commerce, the people of Elam dug a manmade canal to join the two rivers and this canal ran close to Susa. It is beside this canal that the vision takes place which explains the end of human history. A person LIKE a man is standing on the shore before Daniel, who we learn is the angel Gabriel. The voice of a man calls out to have Gabriel explain the vision to Daniel. As we saw earlier, a river is often symbolic of the Holy Spirit, so this COULD be God telling Gabriel what to do.

There are three angels named in the Bible. We all know what happened to Lucifer. Michael seems to lead the angelic warriors and is seen as the protector of Israel. Gabriel seems to be the messenger of God’s coming. He is the one who explains this vision of the future and is also the one who proclaims the birth of Christ.

## Ram = Bear = Medo-Persia Daniel 8:3-4,20

**3** Then I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a ram which had two horns was standing in front of the canal. Now the two horns were long, but one was longer than the other, with the longer one coming up last. **4** I saw the ram butting westward, northward, and southward, and no other beasts could stand before him nor was there anyone to rescue from his power, but he did as he pleased and magnified himself.

**20** "The ram which you saw with the two horns represents the kings of Media and Persia.

As we saw last week the Medo-Persian empire was unbalanced. This was symbolized last week by a lopsided bear, this week it is represented by a ram but with one horn longer than the other, again symbolizing the lopsided structure of the empire. It also indicates that the longer one comes up last which reflects that the weaker Median empire existed prior to the stronger Persian empire. This passage does not give us much more information about Medo-Persia, but in the following passages, we do learn more about how they were conquered by the Greeks.

## Goat = Leopard = Macedonian Greece Daniel 8:5-8,21-23

**5** While I was observing, behold, a male goat was coming from the west over the surface of the whole earth without touching the ground; and the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes. **6** He came up to the ram that had the two horns, which I had seen standing in front of the canal, and rushed at him in his mighty wrath. **7** I saw him come beside the ram, and he was enraged at him; and he struck the ram and shattered his two horns, and the ram had no strength to withstand him. So he hurled him to the ground and trampled on him, and there was none to rescue the ram from his power. **8** Then the male goat magnified himself exceedingly. But as soon as he was mighty, the large horn was broken; and in its place there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven.

**21** "The shaggy goat represents the kingdom of Greece, and the large horn that is between his eyes is the first king. **22** "The broken horn and the four horns that arose in its place represent four kingdoms which will arise from his nation, although not with his power. **23** "In the latter period of their rule, When the transgressors have run their course, A king will arise, Insolent and skilled in intrigue.

The goat is described as coming from the west, just as Alexander approached the Levant from the west. As the Leopard in chapter 7 indicated speed, so does the description that he was coming without touching the ground. The description on one conspicuous horn describes Alexander, who focused the glory on himself far more than on the empire. Some historians believe that Alexander’s conquering of the known world was fueled by his rage that his friend and general Haphaestion had been killed, thus he was rushing in his wrath and destroyed Medo-Persia with very little resistance. When Alexander attacked, Persian King Darius the III called for all of the provincial governors, called satraps, to defend the kingdom. Instead, seeing the overwhelming forces of Alexander, Darius fled the battlefield in terror before the armies had engaged.

Once Medo-Persia was conquered, Alexander literally partied himself to death in attempting to magnify his own role in the army’s victories. It is believed that his final illness was brought on by his alcoholic excesses. As he was dying there was concern about who should inherit his throne. When questioned, he said, “to the strongest”.

After Alexander’s death, his four generals fought and eventually the kingdom was divided between them: Cassander ruled in the West including Macedonia, most of Greece, and parts of Thrace. Lysimachus ruled in the North including Lydia, Ionia, Phrygia, and other parts of present-day Turkey. Seleucus ruled in the east including present-day Iran, Iraq, Syria, and parts of Central Asia. Ptolemy ruled in the south including Egypt and neighboring regions, including most of Israel.

## Fourth Horn = Fourth Beast = Revived Roman Empire Daniel 8:9-14,23-27

**9** Out of one of them came forth a rather small horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Beautiful Land. **10** It grew up to the host of heaven and caused some of the host and some of the stars to fall to the earth, and it trampled them down. **11** It even magnified itself to be equal with the Commander of the host; and it removed the regular sacrifice from Him, and the place of His sanctuary was thrown down. **12** And on account of transgression the host will be given over to the horn along with the regular sacrifice; and it will fling truth to the ground and perform its will and prosper. **13** Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to that particular one who was speaking, "How long will the vision about the regular sacrifice apply, while the transgression causes horror, so as to allow both the holy place and the host to be trampled?" **14** He said to me, "For 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the holy place will be properly restored."

**23** "In the latter period of their rule, When the transgressors have run their course, A king will arise, Insolent and skilled in intrigue. **24** "His power will be mighty, but not by his own power, And he will destroy to an extraordinary degree And prosper and perform his will;He will destroy mighty men and the holy people. **25** "And through his shrewdness He will cause deceit to succeed by his influence; And he will magnify himself in his heart, And he will destroy many while they are at ease. He will even oppose the Prince of princes, But he will be broken without human agency. **26** "The vision of the evenings and mornings Which has been told is true; But keep the vision secret, For it pertains to many days in the future." **27** Then I, Daniel, was exhausted and sick for days. Then I got up again and carried on the king’s business; but I was astounded at the vision, and there was none to explain it.” (Da 8:1-27 NAS95)

From the realm of Cassander in the west, a small city started to gain power. As their influence spread, they changed from a city to a republic and from a republic to an empire, spreading to cover the known world and expanding the boundaries beyond anything Alexander or his generals had imagined. But then the timeline of the interpretation jumps forward in history to a time when the ruler of a revived Rome is in power. In verse 10-12, we see that he does supernatural things and in verse 24 we see that his power comes from a source outside himself. He may be the ultimate in demon possession. He will attack people who are not threatening him and actively oppose the things of God. When his power if finally broken, it will be broken by supernatural means…specifically through God’s intervention.

As to the 2300 days, there are various interpretations. Some believe that each day is 1 year, and that dating from the Punic wars when Rome became an international power that this lasts until sometime around 2035 on our calendar. Other people believe it is the number of actual days that the Antichrist will be in power or about 6 ½ years of the 7 year tribulation period. Still others believe that it is 2300 evenings and mornings, so 1150 days not 2300 days, so it is about 3 ¼ years of the tribulation period when he actively persecutes followers of God. The truth is, any of these is a guess and unlikely to be true because Gabriel tells Daniel, “The vision of the evenings and mornings Which has been told is true; But keep the vision secret, For *it* pertains to many days *in the future.”* We will not know what the meaning of the 2300 days is until God reveals it.

## So what about you?

While we have covered a large swath of prophetic history, how does this apply to you? I would argue that there are several ways:

1. We can trust God because He knows it all in advance.

Bible prophecy is not a guess or a hope, it is God writing history in advance. Famous false prophets like Nostradamus, write their prophecies in such vague terms that you can interpret them as you like. His supposed prediction of Hiroshima said,

"The heavenly dart with stretch its course
Death in the speaking: a great achievement
The proud nation brought low by the stone in the tree
Rumours of a monstrous human, bring purge, then expiation."

This is nothing like the prophecy we see today where in the scripture it says, “The ram which you saw with the two horns represents the kings of Media and Persia” and “The shaggy goat *represents* the kingdom of Greece, and the large horn that is between his eyes is the first king.” The Bible is accurate because God knows the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46:10).

1. Keep your eyes open and be prepared.

Joseph Goebbels said, “If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it.” All of the presidents and many other politicians of the last 32 years have been caught in lies, usually to make themselves look better.

Daniel says of the coming world leader: “And through his shrewdness He will cause deceit to succeed by his influence.” This man will not just be a liar, but a shrewd liar, his lies will be difficult to detect. I believe that as we get closer to the end, leaders will become better at lying. We need to learn to discern the truth, even when the truth goes against our political leanings and biases. We also need to help others to discern truth, but we don’t do that through arguing, but instead praying for them to have abounding love.

“**9** ¶ And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, **10** so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;” (Php 1:9-10 NAS95)

1. Endeavor to be submit.

The most common description of this coming world leader is that they are prideful and brag too much. But in every case, scripture says:

“**6** But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE." **7** Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” (Jas 4:6-7 NAS95)

The way to overcome pride is not to seek humility but to submit to God.

How to submit.

# Daniel 8 – Of Rams, Goats and Horns

## Location: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the Ulai Daniel 8:1-2,15-19

There are three \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ named in the Bible

* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ rebelled against God and leads the fallen angels we call demons
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ seems to lead the angelic warriors and is seen as the protector of Israel.
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ seems to be the messenger of God’s coming.

## \_\_\_\_\_\_ = Bear = Medo-Persia Daniel 8:3-4,20

## \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ = Leopard = Macedonian Greece Daniel 8:5-8,21-23

After Alexander’s death, his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ generals fought and eventually the kingdom was divided between them:

* Cassander ruled in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Lysimachus ruled in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Seleucus ruled in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Ptolemy ruled in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

## Fourth \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ = Fourth Beast = Revived Roman Empire Daniel 8:9-14,23-27

Τhe timeline of the interpretation jumps \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in history

As to the 2300 days, there are various interpretations

* each day is 1 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* it is the number of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that the Antichrist will be in power
* it is 2300 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, so 1150 days not 2300 days

We will not know what the meaning of the 2300 days is until \_\_\_\_\_\_ reveals it.

## So, what about \_\_\_\_\_\_?

1. We can trust God because He \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ it all in advance.

The Bible is accurate because God knows the \_\_\_\_\_\_ from the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Isaiah 46:10

1. Keep your eyes \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and be prepared.

We also need to help others to discern \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
 Philippians 1:9-10

1. Endeavor to be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

The way to overcome pride is to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to God
 James 4:6-7