

## A Prediction of an End-Times Anti-Semitic Ruler

### Daniel 8:23-27

Daniel 8:20-25 - *“The ram which you saw, having the two horns—they are the kings of Media and Persia.<sup>21</sup> And the male goat is the kingdom of Greece. The large horn that is between its eyes is the first king.<sup>22</sup> As for the broken horn and the four that stood up in its place, four kingdoms shall arise out of that nation, but not with its power.”*

*“ And in the latter time of their kingdom,*

*When the transgressors have reached their fullness,*

*A king shall arise,*

*Having fierce features,*

*Who understands sinister schemes.*

*<sup>24</sup> His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power;*

*He shall destroy fearfully,*

*And shall prosper and thrive;*

*He shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people.*

*<sup>25</sup> “ Through his cunning*

*He shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule,<sup>[a]</sup>*

*And he shall exalt himself in his heart.*

*He shall destroy many in their prosperity.*

*He shall even rise against the Prince of princes;*

*But he shall be broken without human means.*

*<sup>26</sup> “ And the vision of the evenings and mornings*

*Which was told is true;*

*Therefore seal up the vision,*

*For it refers to many days in the future.”*

*<sup>27</sup> And I, Daniel, fainted and was sick for days; afterward I arose and went about the king’s business. I was astonished by the vision, but no one understood it.”*

## Background Notes

The first half of Daniel 8 tells us of Daniel's vision of two beasts that represented two of the world's ancient empires – the butting ram represented the Medo-Persian Empire, and the swift goat represented the Greek Empire. We don't have to guess at this interpretation of this vision because it is given to us in verses 20-21: *"The ram which you saw, having the two horns—they are the kings of Media and Persia.<sup>21</sup> And the male goat is the kingdom of Greece. The large horn that is between its eyes is the first king."*

We saw that the large horn of the goat represented Alexander the Great of the Greek Empire. After Alexander's death, the Greek empire was divided among his four generals. Four kingdoms resulted, represented by the four horns that replace the broken large horn: *"As for the broken horn and the four that stood up in its place, four kingdoms shall arise out of that nation, but not with its power"(v22).*

Out of the Seleucid kingdom to the north of Israel, which was one of these four horns or divisions, a king arose who was similar to Hitler in his hatred of the Jewish people. He killed thousands of Jews, he destroyed Scripture, and he desecrated the Temple. This little horn of the Seleucid kingdom was Antiochus IV. His friends called him Antiochus Epiphanes, or the "Illustrious One," but with a little play of words the Jews called him Antiochus Epimanes -- the "madman"!

A Jewish family, the Maccabees, rose up against the Seleucids and were able to gain a measure of independence for Israel. The Temple was cleansed in 165BC, an event still remembered today in the celebration of the Jewish festival of Hanukkah. In verse 25 we see the prediction that this little horn of Antiochus Epiphanes would be broken without human agency -- God would break down this ruthless tyrant. Antiochus died, insane, in 163BC.

## Doctrinal Points

### 1. The little horn of Daniel 8 is not the same as the little horn of Daniel 7.

When you first read the prophetic books of Daniel and Revelation, it's easy to get confused concerning all the beasts and all the horns. This is understandable! And when it comes to the little horns of Daniel 7 and 8, it's very easy to get mixed up if you don't study the chapters carefully. We saw in our study of Daniel 7 that the little horn that grew out of one of the horns of the fourth beast, or the Roman Empire, represented the powerful end time world leader known as the "Roman beast." He will head up a western empire called the "revived Roman Empire," consisting of ten subdivisions covering Europe and regions of the old Roman Empire. This end time Roman beast, who is associated in some way with the number 666 (Revelation 13), is the same as the little horn of Daniel 7.

The little horn of Daniel 8, on the other hand, was the Seleucid king Antiochus IV of history. This little horn didn't come out of the ferocious fourth beast of Daniel 7, which represents the ancient Roman Empire, but came out of the male goat

of Daniel 8, which represents the ancient Greek Empire. So clearly the little horn of Daniel 8 is not the same as the little horn of Daniel 7.

## **2. The little horn of Daniel 8 typifies the future king of the North.**

In both Daniel 8:17 and 8:19, the Angel Gabriel told Daniel that the vision of Daniel 8 would not be completely fulfilled until the end times. Let's look at the end of verse 17: *"but he said to me, "Understand, son of man, that the vision refers to the time of the end."* And verse 19: *"And he said, "Look, I am making known to you what shall happen in the latter time of the indignation; for at the appointed time the end shall be."* So we believe that the prophecy of the little horn of Daniel 8, while

fulfilled historically in Antiochus IV of the Seleucid Empire, foreshadows or pictures an end time world leader as well.

Notice verse 23 in this connection: *"And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors have reached their fullness, a king shall arise having fierce features, who understands sinister schemes."*

So while Antiochus IV arose near the end of the Seleucid kingdom, he foreshadows a cruel anti-Semitic ruler of the end times. This ruler will appear on the world stage when *"transgressors have come to the full"* (v23) -- that is, during the Tribulation period of the future, also known as the time of Jacob's trouble (Jeremiah 30:7).

Who is this end time leader? Biblical commentaries and students of God's Word are not in full agreement. Some Bible students feel that he is the Roman beast of 666 notoriety. Others, including myself, feel that he is the future "King of the North." When we get to Daniel 11, we will see that there is an end time figure known as the King of the North who comes against Israel, and it certainly seems that he is distinct from the Roman beast. Remember the little horns of Daniel 7 and 8 are not the same person. The Roman beast or little horn of Daniel 7 will come out of one of the areas of the revived Roman Empire, maybe out of the present day European Union. The King of the North (who was foreshadowed by Antiochus Epiphanes, the little horn of Daniel 8), will come out of the region which was once the Seleucid Empire. As we mentioned in our last talk, this region would include Syria, to the north of Israel, as well as what is now Iraq and Iran, and also a good portion of Turkey.

So it appears that the future King of the North will come out of the Muslim world and will be a product of the radical Muslim movement that hates Israel, and wants to annihilate Israel. We see in verse 24 that his power will not be his own -- it will be satanic power directed against God's people. *"His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power – he shall destroy fearfully and shall prosper and thrive. He shall destroy the mighty and also the holy people."*

Verse 25 tells us that this proud, cunning end time ruler will kill many who think that they're safe. They likely believe they are safe because they are protected under the temporary covenant of the Tribulation period -- we'll read about that in Daniel 9.

The King of the North will even dare to oppose Christ, the Prince of princes. This is probably when the Lord returns to this earth to set up His earthly millennial kingdom, the kingdom that will last for a thousand years. This King of the North will be defeated directly by the Lord Himself: *“through his cunning he shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; and he shall exalt himself in his heart. He shall destroy many in their prosperity. He shall even rise against the Prince of princes, but he shall be broken without human means.”*

Is he the present ruler of Iran or Syria? We don't know. Is the future King of the North alive today? Again, we don't know. Only time will tell. What we do know is that the little horn of Daniel 8 typifies or pictures for us the future King of the North.

## **Practical Application**

### **Don't quit work when you study Bible prophecy.**

Verses 26-27: *“And the vision of the evenings and mornings which was told is true; therefore seal up the vision, for it refers to many days in the future.”* <sup>27</sup> *And I, Daniel, fainted and was sick for days; afterward I arose and went about the king's business. I was astonished by the vision, but no one understood it.”*

Daniel was told that the vision pertained to many days in the future -- not just the four centuries until Antiochus Epiphanes appeared during the inter-testamental period, but also to the end times. Daniel's response to the vision was the same response we might have when we realize the horrors to come in the future -- even though, like Daniel, we don't understand all the details fully.

When we read in the prophecies of Revelation, for example, of the worldwide catastrophes and plagues to come in the future, and the many people who will die, it can actually be physically exhausting and emotionally disturbing. You might even feel like quitting work -- or not even getting out of bed! But Daniel recovered and got back up and continued his secular job of serving the king, even though he knew the Babylonian Empire was soon to fall to the Persians.

And so should we get back up and continue our work. The study of biblical prophecy can be emotionally draining -- but don't become depressed or discouraged! Don't quit work when you study Bible prophecy!