

## DANIEL - PART 8

### Yom Kippur

Dr. Derek Morris

Preaching passage: Daniel 8  
Subject: What will happen after 2300 days  
Complement: the sanctuary will be cleansed.  
Exegetical idea: After 2300 days, the sanctuary will be cleansed.  
Homiletical idea: **God will deal with the sin problem!**  
Purpose: To remind my hearers that God will deal with the sin problem.

#### Introduction

Have you ever worked on a puzzle and you just couldn't figure it out? One of our sons made this puzzle at family camp many years ago. You are supposed to get the ring free. I worked on this for a long time, and finally got the ring off. Unfortunately, I had absolutely no idea how I did it! Then I couldn't get it back on again! So I had to screw off the post to get the ring back on! By that time, my head was hurting! I just couldn't figure it out!

That's how the prophet Daniel felt, and worse, after he had received the vision recorded in chapter 8 of his book. His head hurt! Listen to Daniel's testimony, recorded in the last verse of Daniel 8. "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."

And I must confess that as I have been studying this past week, I have felt astonished by the vision myself! I don't understand it all. And my head has hurt too! But I have cried out to God to help me. And I ask you to pray as I speak and as we listen. Call upon Me, the Lord says, and I will answer you and show you great and marvelous things which you have not known."

Now let us consider this vision that caused Daniel's head to spin? When did Daniel receive this vision? According to Daniel 8:1, this vision came in the third year of the reign of

Belshazzar. The year was 551 BC. That was 2 years after the vision of Daniel 7. If you remember from our last message in this series, in the first year of Belshazzar's rule as co-regent with his father Nabonidus, 553 BC, Daniel had a dream about four animals that came up out of the water: a winged lion, a lop-sided bear, a four-headed winged leopard, and a nondescript beast with iron teeth. The winged lion represented? The great kingdom of Babylon, just like the head of gold in the vision of the huge metal man in Daniel chapter 2. The lop-sided bear with 3 ribs in its mouth represented...? Medo-Persia, just like the chest and arms of silver in Daniel chapter 2. The four-headed winged leopard represented...? Greece, just like the belly and thighs of brass in Daniel chapter 2. And the fierce nondescript beast with iron teeth represented...? The Iron Monarchy of Rome, just like the iron legs of the image in the vision of Daniel chapter 2.

Then we noticed in the vision of Daniel 7 that a little horn that came up in the midst of the ten horns of the nondescript beast and that little horn spoke pompous words against the Most High and persecuted the saints of the Most High. Some of us were startled to discover that this little horn power was our own Christian church which apostatized and turned away from the truth of God's Word.

At the end of Daniel chapter 7, a heavenly messenger offered Daniel this word of hope: Daniel 7:26-27. "But the court shall be seated, and they shall take away his dominion to consume and destroy it forever. Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him!"

That's good news! What do you say? But Daniel was still greatly troubled. Two years have passed. The year is now 551 BC. Daniel receives another vision from God. But instead of

4 animals, he only sees two. And instead of strange composite beasts, he sees common animals, a ram and a goat. And when Daniel records this vision, he uses Hebrew rather than the Aramaic of Daniel 7.

Notice that in this vision Daniel sees himself at the citadel of Shushan, or Susa. This fortress was located 230 miles east of Babylon. “Why is that important?” you might ask. Susa would become one of the wealthiest capitals of the Persian empire. Remember that fact as we pick up the story in Daniel 8:4. “.....” Does this ram with two horns, one higher than the other, remind you of one of the four beasts in the vision of Daniel chapter 7? You’re right. The lop-sided bear! And notice that this ram pushes westward, northward, and southward. In other words, it’s coming from the east. And that is exactly what Medo-Persia did. Pressing westward and northward and southward. In Daniel 8:20, a heavenly messenger confirms that interpretation. “.....”

Does anyone have an idea why, in this vision of Daniel 8, the Lord passes over the kingdom of Babylon, represented by the head of gold in Daniel chapter 2 and winged lion of Daniel chapter 7? Perhaps because the Babylonian kingdom is already disintegrating, soon to pass off the scene in 539BC. But perhaps there is another reason, which will become clearer as we continue our study.

Notice what happens next. Daniel 8:5-8. “.....” What kingdom came from the west, moving so quickly that it’s feet did not even touch the ground? You’re right. The kingdom of Greece. Just like the winged leopard of Daniel chapter 7. And who do you think the notable horn between the goat’s eyes represents? Alexander the Great! But notice the prophecy in Daniel 8:8. “.....” When the goat kingdom became strong, at the zenith of its

power, the large horn was broken. Alexander died. And four horns grew up in its place. The four horns that grow up on this goat remind us for the four heads of the winged leopard of Daniel chapter 7. And a heavenly messenger confirms that interpretation in Daniel 8:21-22.

“.....”

But then the vision shifts. Instead of giving us a parallel to the fourth fierce beast of Daniel 7, the prophesy of Daniel chapter 8 shifts ahead to the activity of the little horn power. Look with me at Daniel 8:9-14. “.....” Some Bible scholars suggest that the little horn power of Daniel 8 is a weak Syrian king named Antiochus Epiphanes. Son of Antiochus the Great, this Syrian king attempted to Hellenize Palestine and after being humiliated during a military campaign in Egypt, Antiochus Epiphanes expressed his frustration by desecrating the Temple in Jerusalem in 168 BC. He even sacrificed a pig to Zeus and forbade the practice of Judaism. This desecration of the Temple in Jerusalem resulted in a violent Jewish uprising, led by Judas Maccabees. The author of the books of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Maccabees identified Antiochus Epiphanes as the little horn of Daniel 8 that desecrated the sanctuary. This interpretation was also held by Josephus, in the time of Christ, and by many church fathers. According to the books of Maccabees, Temple worship was restored after 3 years and 10 days, in 165 BC. That's approximately 1100 days. To make the little horn prophesy of Daniel 8 fit, scholars suggest that the 2300 days in Daniel 8:14 is actually 2300 evenings and mornings, or 1150 days. That's close to the amount of time that the Temple was desecrated during the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes.

But there are problems with this interpretation. Even if you reduce the 2300 days to 1150, it still doesn't accurately fit the 3 years and 10 days of Temple desecration under Antiochus Ephiphanes. It's close, but it doesn't fit.

But the problems with this interpretation get worse. The Hebrew expression evening-mornings in Daniel 8:14 refers to complete days, as in the account of creation in Genesis 1. And why would a period of 2300 days, a little over 6 years make Daniel speechless and make his head hurt? But if Daniel understood the words of the holy one in Daniel 8:14 as a time prophecy which uses the principle of a day for a year, then the prophecy of Daniel 8:14 stretched for 2300 years, down to the time of the end. That would make your head hurt!

But the greatest problem with interpreting the little horn of Daniel 8 as Antiochus Epiphanes is the fact that Jesus, almost 200 years after Antiochus Epiphanes, spoke of the abomination of desolations spoken of by the prophet Daniel in connection with the little horn power as still in the future. In Matthew 24:15, we read, “.....”

The little horn power of Daniel 8 is not an obscure Syria king, Antiochus Epiphanes. The little horn power of Daniel 8 is the same little horn that emerges from the ten horns of the fierce nondescript beast with iron teeth of Daniel 7.

Let’s go back and reconsider the words of Daniel 8:9-12. “.....” Out of the “one” refers not to one of the four horns of the Greek kingdom, but “one” of the four winds of heaven. How do we know that? Because the word for winds in Daniel 8:8 is feminine, and the word “one” in Daniel 8:9 is also feminine. And if you notice the directions that this little horn grows, it is coming from the west. The location of Rome, and the Christian church which found its center in Rome. The words that follow here in Daniel chapter 8 remind us of the little horn power described in Daniel chapter 7. Daniel 8:10-12 “.....”

The expression “grew up to the host of heaven” reminds us of the story of the Tower of Babel. The builders of the Tower of Babel sought to exalt themselves rather than to humble

themselves before God. They sought to put themselves in the place of God rather than be submissive to the will of God. This little horn power trampled truth to the ground. Psalm 119:142 tells us the “Your law is truth.” This is the same little horn power of Daniel 7 that sought to change times and laws. It also took away the daily, referring not just to the daily sacrifices, but the daily ministry of the priest, representing the ministry of Jesus on our behalf. It tells us in Daniel 8:11 that this little horn power “exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host.” The Hebrew word there translated “prince” is the technical term for the High Priest. By taking away the ministry of Jesus and replacing it with a man-made system of works and religious obligations, this little horn power spoke pompous words against the Most High.

And Daniel is undoubtedly wondering, “How long until this desolation end?” How long until God deals with this problem? And then the prophet hears two holy messengers talking to each other? One of them asks the question that is on Daniel’s mind. “How long will the vision be, concerning the daily sacrifices and the transgression of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot?” And then the other holy messenger, recognizing that his is also Daniel’s question, turns to him and says, “For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed.”

Another holy one had spoken in Daniel chapter 4 when judgment was declared on King Nebuchadnezzar. Now a holy one speaks of a cosmic judgment: “Unto 2300 days and then the sanctuary shall be cleansed.”

Now those words may not mean much to us. But they meant something to Daniel. Even though Daniel did not understand the vision, he understood that the cleansing of the sanctuary was a clear reference to Yom Kippur. The Day of Atonement. Yom Kippur was that special

day, once a year, when sin was dealt with. The sanctuary was cleansed. **(SLIDE #1)** Perhaps that is why God chose to use the ram and the goat in this vision. Both the ram and the goat were used in connection with the greatest Jewish yearly festival—Yom Kippur, the day of Atonement. While sacrifices were offered every day as an atonement for sin, pointing forward to the Lamb of God who would come and take away the sins of the world, while those sacrifices happened every day, a special work of atonement occurred on Yom Kippur. It happened on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month, during our month of October. On the 1<sup>st</sup> day of that month, the priests would blow the trumpets. **(SLIDE #2)** That was a call to prepare for Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. All those who had not confessed their sins by Yom Kippur would be cast out of the camp. On the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month, the High Priest would enter the Most Holy Place **(SLIDE #3)** and sprinkle the blood of the sacrifices before the Ark of the Covenant. This was a time of cleansing not only for individuals but for the sanctuary itself.

Some have suggested that the word cleansed is a poor translation of the Hebrew word tsadaq, used in Daniel 8:14. It's true that tsadaq can be translated to set right, to restore, or to make righteous. But the idea of cleansing is clearly implied. The Rabbis who translated the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, a work which we call the Septuagint, they translated the Hebrew verb tsadaq with the Greek verb katharizo. That's the same verb that the apostle John uses in 1 John 1:7 when he declares that "the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin." And that same verb is used again in 1 John 1:9 where we are told, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to CLEANSE us from all unrighteousness."

This time prophesy in Daniel 8:14 is referring to a time when sin will be dealt with and cleansing will occur. This time of cleansing and judgment was portrayed each year in the Jewish

festival of Yom Kippur. Listen to the description of the Day of Atonement, in Leviticus 16:30. “.....” And just as the believer was cleansed and the earthly sanctuary was cleansed on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, so the day is coming when a final cleansing will occur. There will be a final dealing with sin. And that brings me hope today. Because it tells me that this old sinful world will not go on forever. A day is coming when God will deal with the sin problem. A day is coming when God will make all things new. A day is coming when God will create a new heavens and a new earth.

And we will all rejoice when the sin problem is finally dealt with, won't we? No more death. No more sorrow. No more crying. No more pain. The former things will be passed away! But you say to me, Pastor Derek, what about my loved ones who aren't ready to meet Jesus face to face? What about them? Go and tell them that before the final work of cleansing is complete, they can call upon Jesus. There is still time. Call upon Jesus, believing that the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. Believing that if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Believing that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Tell your loved ones and friends to call upon Jesus while there is still time. Because everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

So how much more time do we have before God finally deals with the sin problem? When will that great Day of Atonement begin? And even more important, when will it end? Because, once the judgment is complete, the declaration will be heard, “He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still. He who is righteous, let him be righteous still. He who is holy, let him be holy still.” And then, there is no more time to be saved.

In our next study, as we consider Daniel chapter 9, we will discover when this great time prophesy of the 2300 days begins, and when it ends. I hope you'll join us for that study from the book of Daniel. But more important than that, I hope and pray that you will allow Jesus to cleanse you from all sin, that you will receive Him as your personal Savior and Lord, so when the final work of cleansing and judgment is complete, you will not be filled with fear. Rather, you will be filled with hope. And filled with assurance. And when the sky catches fire, and rolls back like a scroll, you will look up with joy and welcome our glorious King, Jesus Christ our Lord!

I hope that you don't leave church today with your head hurting. This is a complex study, and there is much that, like Daniel, we don't fully understand. Don't worry if you can't figure it all out. This we know for sure: sin will not run rampant forever. A day is coming when God will deal with the sin problem once and for all. So trust Him today. Let Him cleanse you from your sin today. And then let us look forward to the day when God will deal with the sin problem once and for all and He will make all things new!

Appeal:

As I was speaking about cleansing from sin, perhaps someone here came under conviction that you need Jesus to make you clean today. I want to invite you to allow Jesus to make you clean. Perhaps some of you thought of a loved one or friend who needs that cleansing today. I want to invite you to pray for that person right now. Pray that God will use you to share the love of Jesus with that person while there is still time. And then let us rejoice that sin will not run rampant forever. A day is coming when God will deal with the sin problem once and for all.

Then there will be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. And there shall be no more pain. And a voice will be heard from the throne saying, “Behold, I am making all things new.”