

Daniel 8 John Karmelich

1. Chapter 8 is all about the vision of the “goat and the ram”. Sounds a football game. ☺
 - a) In Chapter 7 we had a vision of a lion with eagle’s wings, a leopard, a bear and a 4th beast with 10 horns. In Chapter 8, we get a new vision, with new animals.
 - b) Am I the only one who ponders: Lord, why don’t you just bluntly say, “Look Daniel, there are going to be some new empires in the future after Babylon, and here are the names of them. Why use these animal idioms to describe the future? God, why is prophecy so “fuzzy”? ☺
 - i) Part of the reason is to get us to think about it.
 - a) There is something within human nature, where we want to solve a mystery. Call it a curiosity factor.
 - b) By God using these word-pictures, and not exactly-sure-what-it-means visions, we spend time thinking about God’s Word. This is what God wants for us in the first place.
 - ii) Another reason is that we remember “word-pictures” better than we do facts and figures. A lion with eagle’s wings is physically easier for our brains to recall than to remember King Nebuchadnezzar, let alone pronounce it. ☺
 - iii) A third reason has to do with God’s great redemptive plan and the fact that Satan is doing all he can to stop it. Satan knows his scriptures probably better than we do. If every detail were bluntly clear as to these future prophecies, Satan would do all in his power to stop it.
 - c) Yet, when the Scripture does come true, the literalness is often amazing.
 - i) Critics of the Bible have a very difficult time with Daniel. They’ll say, “well, it must be late-dated. That’s the only way to explain the accuracy.”
 - a) Well, we have fragments of Daniel that are part of the Dead Sea Scrolls.
 - (1) The Dead Sea scrolls date back to the time of the 1st century BC. How could they be in that collection of scrolls if Daniel was written, say hundreds of years after the facts as the critics argue?
 - b) We also know that Daniel was translated into Greek between 1st and 2nd Century BC as along with the rest of the Old Testament. Once you study those facts, it destroys the late-dating arguments of Daniel. (source: Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol. 14, Page 1178)
2. We, as good Bible believing Christians tend to forget there are a lot of people out there who don’t believe the Bible is the Word of God. Prophecy is a way of validating the Bible.
 - a) The reason roughly 30% of the Bible is future prophecy is to validate Bible accuracy.
 - b) Chapter 8 is all about history fulfilled.
 - i) Most of the vision of Chapter 7 is tied to the “end-times”, which is the 7-year period that is most of the Book of Revelation.
 - ii) Chapter 8 is all events that are future to Daniel, but past tense to us. They occurred within a few hundred years of Daniel’s lifetime.
 - a) Still, there are “hints” that parts of Daniel 8 have a double-fulfillment in the end-times. We’ll talk about those verses as we get there.
 - c) Prophecy helps to validate Daniel as a prophet himself.
 - i) Most of the prophecy books have short term and long-term fulfillment.
 - ii) The short-term fulfillment helps to *validate* the prophet as a prophet of God.
 - a) If God wants us to know about the future end-time prophecy stuff, it helps to have short-term (past tense to us) prophecy fulfilled to validate Daniel as a prophet of God.

3. Chapter 8 has “hints” of double-fulfillment that leans toward the end times.
 - a) Prophecy is not just future predictions. It is also “patterns”. Both Judaism and Christianity teach that Bible prophecy is patterns.
 - i) Prophecy also has double fulfillment.
 - a) When God tells David about a future son who will be a great ruler, some of those passages refer to Solomon himself. Yet, there are hints and patterns that show a long-term double fulfillment that these predictions also refer to a Messiah who will rule forever, which is Jesus.
 - b) I believe it was Dr. J. Vernon McGee who gave the best illustration for this:
 - i) I’ll paraphrase his example. Imagine standing on a large plain on a clear day, and looking at a mountain range in the background. What you can’t see from the plain is that the mountain range is actual two sets of mountains with a large valley in between. Prophecy often works the same way, with both short and long-term fulfillment of prophecy.
4. When I start to get into the particulars of Chapter 8, most of the vision centers on an evil man who we-know-from-history ruled over Israel around 200BC. History has shown pretty clearly that this guy was “Antiochus IV Epiphanies” and we’ll discuss this guy further in the chapter.
 - a) The main reason we know there will be a double-fulfillment of this prophecy has to do with something Jesus said.
 - i) “So when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not” (let the reader understand), “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. (Mark 13:14 NKJV)
 - ii) The double fulfillment keys on Jesus’ words “when you see”.
 - iii) The people who heard Jesus speaking knew what the “abomination of desolation” was all about. Daniel here predicted it in Chapter 8 and again in other chapters.
 - a) The problem was that, when these people heard it, it was past history.
 - b) Now Jesus is telling them “when you see...!”.
 - c) That’s an important point to remember when you read Daniel. I don’t expect you to memorize the name Antiochus IV Epiphanies or even all the implications of the term “abomination of desolation”. What you should remember is Jesus said this event is going to happen again.
 - d) I’ll get into this more when we get to those verses in Chapter 8.
5. One more “big-picture” idea I wanted to get across before I start overanalyzing the verses. ☺
 - a) Chapter 8 describes horrible things that are going to happen to the nation of Israel.
 - b) God knew in advance these things were going to happen. I’ll describe a few details later, but in summary, it was pretty gruesome.
 - c) Think about this from Daniel’s perspective. At the time when Daniel saw this vision, the Temple, and Jerusalem was in ruins. All the Jewish people were moved out of the land and are currently scattered all over the Babylonian Empire. Now God is telling Daniel in effect “oh by the way, Israel will be back in the land one day and the temple will be rebuilt. Unfortunately the Messiah does not come yet. In fact it is going to get worse than it is right now. In fact, the future will have more horrible event for the Jews once they are back in the land.”
 - d) Since God knew the facts, why didn’t God intervene and stop this from happening?
 - e) I wrestled with this one for a few days. I can’t guarantee a great answer, so here goes:
 - i) God allows horrible and evil things to happen in this world. It is the long-term effect of sin in the world. Sin leads to more sin, and finally to horrible deeds that are too grotesque to think about.

- ii) God is perfect. A perfect God is not only perfect in love, he is also perfect in justice. God can stand no wrong whatsoever. Our problem is we get mad at God because he doesn't judge people or solve issues on our timetable. The judgement often comes after the sinner is dead.
 - iii) Suppose every time a murder was about to happen, God intervened and stopped the murder. Supposed every time somebody was about to lie, or spread a false accusation, then an angel came down and put a hand over our mouth. If that were the case, we wouldn't be complaining about God not intervening, we would be complaining about God intervening too much. A God of perfect-love has to allow free will to exist, even when it means the death of innocent people. The God-of-Justice will then judge that person for eternity.
 - a) My gratitude to Christian apologist Greg Koukl for that last illustration.
 - iv) Jesus himself commented on this: "I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. ⁵But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him" (Luke 12:4-5, NIV)
 - f) The great lesson to learn from Chapter 8 is that God is sovereign. God allows kings to rise to power. Some are good and some are evil. All of them eventually fall, and God is still on the throne. We can't explain all evils and all mysteries, but we walk by *faith* as opposed to our senses that the God of *Justice* as well as the same God of Love exists.
 - i) God also knows all things. This is how he can write history in advance. Because he loves us, he can warn us about impending danger.
 - g) The second great lesson is: we as Christians have to live in a sinful world. Jesus never promises us "all blessings" in our lifetime on earth. If that were the case, people would not turn to Jesus out of necessity, but just for the blessings.
 - i) God only promises us comfort during our time on earth if we keep our focus on Him.
 - ii) God warns us in this chapter of future horrible events. God allows sin to exist, and even to manifest itself in its worst and most violent forms. He allows good people to suffer as well as the guilty. What God *does* do, is warn us of the events to come. Further, he emphasizes the *temporary* timetable of these evil events. We, as Christians need to focus on the "eternal" aspect of living forever in order to survive the *temporary* horrors that are a part of this world.
6. OK, its time for some more animal visions ☺. Chapter 8, Verse 1: In the third year of King Belshazzar's reign, I, Daniel, had a vision, after the one that had already appeared to me.
- a) This vision is 2 years after the one of Chapter 7.
 - b) Notice nothing else is mentioned about the two-year gap.
 - i) Daniel still had a good memory of the last vision.
 - ii) This is why I know Daniel knew the difference between a vision and just-a-bad-pepperoni pizza dream. ☺
 - iii) There are some connections between the two dreams. I suspect Daniel was still contemplating that first vision when this one hit. Daniel may have been praying for more revelation of the meaning of the first vision. If that's true, Daniel got more than he bargained for!
 - c) For all of you date-sensitive people, this is about the year 550 BC.

7. Verse 2: In my vision I saw myself in the citadel of Susa in the province of Elam; in the vision I was beside the Ulai Canal.
- a) Most modern commentators see Daniel as living in Babylon, yet in the vision Daniel was in the citadel of Susa. Susa is part of Persia, hundreds of miles away.
 - i) Daniel was the top administrator for the Babylonian Empire under King Nebuchadnezzar. Therefore Daniel recognized the location of the vision based on his past traveling experience.
 - ii) Many of the older (18th century and back) commentaries, including the 1st century historian Josephus saw Daniel as actually being *in* Susa when this dream occurred. It was as if he said, “Scotty, beam me over to Susa.” ☺
 - iii) I don’t see a lot of merit to discuss this point further, so I’ll just drop it there. ☺
 - b) Here is the interesting part: Daniel was based in Babylon. He knew from the visions as laid out in Chapters 2 and 7, that there would rise another kingdom after the Babylonians.
 - i) In the previous visions the Medo-Persian Empire, which was the next great empire after the Babylonian kingdom was not specifically named. As of the time of this vision, the Babylonian kingdom was on the decline, and a confederacy between the Medes and the Persians was on the rise.
 - c) Susa, as mentioned in Verse 2 will become the capital of the Medo-Persian Empire.
 - i) The story of Esther, who becomes the wife of the King of this Empire, takes place in the palace in Susa (reference Esther 1:2, et.al.)
 - ii) Yet, when Daniel saw this vision, Susa was still a minor place in the world scene. It was not the capital of the rising Medo-Persian Empire at that time.
 - a) “Daniel saw in the vision was not Susa proper but rather the Ulai, a wide artificial canal connecting the Choaspes (modern name: Kerkha) River with the Coprates (modern name: Abdizful) River, which flowed not too far from the city itself. He saw himself standing on the bank of this canal.” Bible Expositor’s Encyclopedia
8. Verse 3: I looked up, and there before me was a ram with two horns, standing beside the canal, and the horns were long. One of the horns was longer than the other but grew up later. ⁴ I watched the ram as he charged toward the west and the north and the south. No animal could stand against him, and none could rescue from his power. He did as he pleased and became great.
- a) We don’t have to spend a lot of time wondering who this two-horned ram was. Reading ahead to Verse 20, we have the answer:
 - i) “The two-horned ram that you saw represents the kings of Media and Persia”.
 - b) Notice Daniel was by this canal and he “looked up” and saw the vision. The idea of the “animals being in the sky” to me, is another word-picture of their greatness of their power and dominance.
 - c) Now that we know it is the Medo-Persia Empire the details we learn from history.
 - i) Verse 3 says that “one horn was longer, and the other grew up later.”
 - a) History records that when the Medo-Persian alliance began, the Medes were by far the stronger of the two parties.
 - b) Later, the Persians became the dominant force. Many historians refer to this empire just as the Persian Empire, because in the latter times of its existence the Persians (modern Iranians) were the dominant force.
 - ii) Verse 4 says the ram charged 1) west, 2) north and 3) south.
 - a) Verse 4 says no “animal” could stand against it. “Animals” or “beasts” depending upon your translation, refers to other local nations, including the one Daniel was a part of, the Babylonian Empire.

- b) History records this is exactly the way the Medo-Persian Empire grew. It never grew to the east. First it attacked the city-states to the west, then it attacked to the north and finally to the south.
 - c) The Medo-Persian Empire was mostly north of Babylon, although the city where Daniel's vision took place is to the east. Either way, Daniel must have understood it meant the fall of the Babylonian Empire.
 - iii) Here is another interesting bit of Bible trivia. The kings of the Medo-Persian Empire did not wear traditional crowns, as we think of them, but helmets with ram-horns on them.
 - (1) Source: 4th century historian Ammianus Marcellinus
 - b) I suspect that fact existed so as to help the Jewish readers of Daniel during the next 20 years recognize Daniel's vision as being from God.
 - d) Verse 4 says, "No animal could stand against him, and none could rescue from his power. He did as he pleased and became great."
 - i) One of the themes of Daniel, and especially Chapter 8 is about the rise and fall of kings. The Medo-Persian Empire was, as they say in sports, "on a hot streak". They won and conquered wherever they went. They developed a huge army. Some historians estimate the size of their army at over a million.
 - ii) Yet we will read in a few verses about the fall of the same Empire.
 - iii) God allows empires and kings to rise, and then he lets them fall.
 - a) God does this for our learning. Again, we go back to 1) Bible validation and 2) to remind us of the "temporary" aspect of sinful man vs. the permanent rule of Jesus over the world.
 - iv) From Daniel's perspective this must have been interesting. This chapter occurs during the time of King Belshazzar. This is the same king who Daniel said, "your time is up" with the handwriting on the wall in the near future.
 - a) One of the reasons Daniel could correctly interpret "the writing on the wall", which is a near-future event from this vision, is his knowledge of the fall of Babylon based on this vision.
9. Verse 5: As I was thinking about this, suddenly a goat with a prominent horn between his eyes came from the west, crossing the whole earth without touching the ground. ⁶ He came toward the two-horned ram I had seen standing beside the canal and charged at him in great rage. ⁷ I saw him attack the ram furiously, striking the ram and shattering his two horns. The ram was powerless to stand against him; the goat knocked him to the ground and trampled on him, and none could rescue the ram from his power.
- a) Verse 21 tells us who this goat is: "The shaggy goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between his eyes is the first king." (Daniel 8, Verse 21).
 - i) History teaches us that the first king of the Grecian Empire was Alexander the Great. Technically, his father was the king and Alexander was his commanding general. His father died during the Empire-growth years, and he became the 1st king of the Grecian Empire.
 - b) Let's talk a little about Bible word-pictures.
 - i) The kingdom of Greece is represented by a goat with a single horn.
 - a) Goats have two horns. No goat has just a single horn between his eyes.
 - ii) A two-horned ram represented the Medo-Persian Empire.
 - iii) A ram is a stronger animal than a goat. A goat, in his own strength, can't beat a ram. Yes, I know, it sounds like a football analogy again. ☺

- c) Verse 5 also mentions a prominent horn.
 - i) Again, history teaches us that this is Alexander the Great.
 - ii) With a small army he defeated not only the Medo-Persian Empire, but also the entire surrounding world around him.
 - iii) Alexander the Great was in his 20's when he led the Grecian army. By the age of 33, there is an ancient legend that he laid in bed weeping as there were no more worlds left to conquer.
- d) Verse 5 says this goat was "crossing the whole earth without touching the ground".
 - i) What Alexander the Great will most be remembered for is the speed in which he conquered the world. Faster than any other time in human history. It seemed like he conquered so fast, he never touched the ground.
 - a) This is a good time to remember a Bible rule on "literalness". It goes:
 - (1) When the *plain* text makes perfect sense, seek no other sense.
 - (2) Since we were not talking about a literal-goat not touching the ground, it is safe to say this is an analogy.
 - (3) The literal-text of a goat not touching the ground does not make perfect sense. Therefore, we know it's a word-picture.
 - (4) I bring this up as there are Bible critics who will say, "How could Alexander the Great conquer without "touching the ground"? This is obviously a word-picture, and not a literal fulfillment.
 - ii) I want to share a military strategy that was invented by Alexander the Great and copied by the Romans. The Greek shields were shiny mirror-like on one side, and dull bronze on the other. The Grecian army would position themselves with their backs to the sun. The dull-side of the shield would face the opponents. At the last second, they would turn the shields around, so the mirror part would reflect off the sun and blind their opponents.
- 10. Verse 8: The goat became very great, but at the height of his power his large horn was broken off, and in its place four prominent horns grew up toward the four winds of heaven.
 - a) "The large horn was broken off at the height of its power"
 - i) Alexander the Great died at the age of 33. History records he became an alcoholic after there were no more worlds left to conquer. He died of pneumonia at that age.
 - ii) Again, notice the accuracy of Bible predictions prior to the events themselves.
 - b) "In its place four prominent horns grew up toward the four winds of heaven".
 - i) The verse says after "the large horn" was broken off, there came 4 other horns. This would refer to four leaders, or four kings that came after "the large horn".
 - a) When asked on his deathbed what to do about the kingdom, Alexander the Great just said, "give it to the strong". Alexander had 4 generals under his command. Each took a fourth part of the empire.
 - (1) There is a part of the Roman Catholic Bible that is rejected by both Protestants and Jews as not being inspired by God, but still considered to be historically accurate. It is 1st and 2nd Maccabees. This historical fact of the kingdom being split into 4 pieces is mentioned in 1st Maccabees, Chapter 1, Verse 8.
 - (2) Much of the historical facts mentioned in this chapter are supported in the text of 1st Maccabees.

- ii) Notice the text says “the four winds of heaven”.
 - a) We had that same idiom in Chapter 7, Verse 2. It simply means God raised up the four generals to be the dominant force in the Empire.
 - b) Each of the Generals formed their own “mini-Empire”. Each general was succeeded by a series of kings who ran each of the four empires.
 - c) The 4 empires were constantly at war with each other over the next century as they attempted to reunite the empire. It never happened. It remained as four separate smaller Empires until the rise of the Roman Empire in the first century BC.
 - iii) It is sort of amazing to think about Daniel was told all this while the Babylonian Empire is still in power.
 - c) Which leads us back to Israel. One of the generals was based out of Syria, which is just north of Israel. The other was based out of Egypt, which is just south of Israel. Therefore, Israel suffered, as it was the center of two fighting factions.
 - i) All of this took place during the 400-year time-gap between the last writings of the Old Testament and first writings of the New Testament.
 - ii) We do have writing preserved from that time period, including 1st and 2nd Maccabees. This writing is not part of the Protestant Bible. Much of it reflects the suffering Israel had due to the wars of these two Greek Empires trying to dominate for control over the Israelite territory.
11. Verse 9: Out of one of them came another horn, which started small but grew in power to the south and to the east and toward the Beautiful Land.
- a) The text now takes the focus away from the 4 kings and just focuses on one of the four kings. Verse 9 says, “Out of one of them came another horn”. Therefore, the text is talking about a descendant of the one kingdom that existed “in the south and east and “toward the Beautiful Land”.
 - i) The “Beautiful Land” is a reference to Israel. It is amazing to think about the fact that the God who created *everything* has stated that this little section of real estate we call Israel *belongs to him*. When you study the Bible, you learn that the Israelites never “own” the land as we think of ownership. That land belongs to God and is given as a “gift” to the nation of Israel. The Israelites are allowed to remain in this land as long as they are obedient to God’s commandments to them. In the Old Testament, real estate “ownership” is the same concept that we think of as renting a property. It is used, but not owned.
 - ii) Here’s a supporting text, given as a warning to Israel:
 - a) “But if you turn away and forsake the decrees and commands I have given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them, then I will uproot Israel from my land, which I have given them, and will reject this temple I have consecrated for my Name. (2nd Chron. 7:19-20a NIV)
 - (1) The reason Israel was “uprooted” in the Babylonian Empire was for long-term disobedience against God’s commandments.
 - b) Let’s get back to Daniel. We have the 4 mini-Greek Empires. For the next several hundred years, two of those four fought over the territory of the Nation of Israel.
 - i) One of those two was known as the Selucian Empire.
 - ii) The 8th king of the Selucian Empire was Antioch IV Euphates. The word “Euphates” is a title and not part of his name. The word is similar to the word “epitome”, as in the “epitome of power”. The word means “illustrious”. History records that he is the “horn” that grew in power here.
 - iii) We know that this horn is Antioch IV because the events of history match up with the events of the rest of Daniel Chapter 8.

12. Verse 10: It grew until it reached the host of the heavens, and it threw some of the starry host down to the earth and trampled on them.
- a) There are 2 major interpretations of this verse. The first is that this is about Antioch IV Epithames
 - i) In this view, the “starry hosts” refer to the Israelites who were killed by Antioch IV.
 - a) In Genesis, when Joseph had the dream of his brothers worshipping him, he referred to his brothers as “eleven stars” (Genesis 37:9).
 - b) Also, Abraham was told by God ““Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.” And He (God) said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” (Genesis 15:5, NKJV)
 - c) If “stars” here, refers to the descendants of the 12 tribes of Israel (i.e., the Israelites), then when Verse 10 says, “it threw some of the starry hosts down to earth and trampled on them” refers to the killing of Jews by the evil deeds of Antioch IV.
 - b) Here is the second major view: The term “host of the heavens” refers to angels.
 - i) “Micaiah continued, “Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne with all the host of heaven standing around him on his right and on his left.” (1 Kings 22:19 NIV)
 - a) Remember that Jesus was the first to rise from the dead. (See Matt hew 27:52). Therefore those who were “around” the throne of heaven in this verse in 1st Kings 22:19 must have been angels.
 - b) Here’s another verse: “You alone are the LORD. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. “(Nehemiah 9:6a NIV)
 - ii) Therefore, the vision is saying, “this “horn” grew in its territory that reached the Temple in Jerusalem, which is a model of the throne of heaven.
 - iii) This second view is the possibility of a double-fulfillment.
 - iv) Revelation 12, in describing Satan, has this sentence: “His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth. (Revelation 12:4a, NIV).
 - a) What it means in Revelation is that a third of the angelic hosts joined Satan in the rebellion against God.
 - b) In Revelation, “stars” are also a word-picture of angels as stated in Revelation 1.20.
 - c) Therefore, when this “horn” in Daniel “threw some of the starry host down to earth”, many commentators tie this verse in Daniel to the one in Revelation where Satan casts down some of the “stars” from heaven.
 - v) This Daniel verse, tied to Revelation is one of the “clues” we have that Chapter 8 has a double-fulfillment between Antioch IV and again in the end-times.
13. Verse 11: It (“the horn”) set itself up to be as great as the Prince of the host; it took away the daily sacrifice from him, and the place of his sanctuary was brought low. ¹² Because of rebellion, the host of the saints and the daily sacrifice were given over to it. It prospered in everything it did, and truth was thrown to the ground.
- a) It says, “It (“the horn”) set itself up to be as great as the Prince of the host.” It means that this guy claimed to be greater than the True and Living God.
 - i) The term “Prince of the host” is only used here in Daniel. If you think of God the Father as being the Ruler over the host of Heaven, I personally see “The Prince” as a title for the Messiah, which is Jesus.
 - a) Therefore, it is another double-fulfillment reference when the Antichrist will speak out against God

- ii) This guy will claim to be a god. Archeologists have found coins minted with Antioch IV's inscription claiming to be a god.
 - b) In direct context, I believe the term "Prince of the host" refers to the High Priest of Israel. The verse says he "took away the daily sacrifice". When the Temple was there, formal animal sacrifices were made twice a day to God. The high priest was in charge of those sacrifices.
 - i) Therefore, being "as great as the Prince of the Host" was when Antioch IV demanded that the animal sacrifices be stopped, as he demanded Israel to worship him.
 - c) It's amazing to think about when Daniel saw this vision, the land of Israel was in ruins. Therefore God was telling Daniel that the temple *would* be rebuilt, as fulfilled in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, but it would also be desecrated by this Greek king.
 - d) Verse 12 says, "It prospered in everything it did, and truth was thrown to the ground."
 - i) The "truth" referred to worship of the true and Living God.
 - ii) History records this guy as a deceiver of the Israelites. He would not tolerate worship of anyone but himself. He made it a death sentence to own a Bible scroll. He stopped the temple sacrifices. He put up an image of himself in the Temple and, as an insult to Jews, slaughtered a pig on the altar.
 - iii) I'm only telling you the "PG-13" version of what happened. The details are much worse. If you read 1st Maccabees, one can get the gruesome details.
14. Verse 13: Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to him, "How long will it take for the vision to be fulfilled--the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, the rebellion that causes desolation, and the surrender of the sanctuary and of the host that will be trampled underfoot?"
- a) We get a temporary break from the main plot of the vision to focus on the people *giving* the visions to Daniel.
 - b) Notice the two people talking are "a holy one" and "another holy one". Personally, I see this as an angel asking God a question. Remember that angels are intercessory creatures between God and man. Think of them as messengers. Angels are not all knowing creatures. (Study 1st Peter 1:12 for a cross-reference on angels).
 - i) In Verse 12, Daniel asks, "when will all this take place". That is a prayer request. In Verse 13, the angel is asking God in effect "yes, Lord, good question. When *does* all this take place?"
 - c) Here was Daniel seeing this horrible future vision about the Temple being rebuilt, and then, not-only-the-Messiah-doesn't-come-immediately, but the Temple is desecrated by this evil future ruler, who 1) demands to be worshipped as God, 2) murders those who disagree with him and 3) stops the animal sacrifices.
 - i) Therefore, Daniel's logical first question is "how long will this take place?"
 - d) That's the type of question we ask God. How long will this suffering take place? Can't Jesus just come back now and save us a lot of grief? Why do you allow us to suffer throw all these horrible things?
 - i) What we have to learn from these lessons is:
 - a) 1) God is in control and we are not.
 - b) 2) God knows *all* things.
 - c) 3) We have to remember, like Daniel that God will ultimately win. We have to suffer through this world, just like Daniel did. Our hope, our safety, our joy comes from God alone. The world has been, is now and will always be a rotten place full of sin. Our focus needs to be on the eternal perspective. We need to be God's witness to this dying world to share with others there is no hope for its redemption.

15. Verse 14: He said to me, "It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated."
 - a) "The date when the temple was cleansed is well established (December 25, 165 BC); counting back 2,300 days sets one in the year that persecution from Antiochus began in earnest (171 BC)" David Guzik
 - i) The December 25th 165 BC date is supported by 1 Maccabees 4:52.
 - ii) The cleansing of the temple is celebrated today as Hanukkah, also known as the "festival of lights".
 - a) "Jesus Himself recognized that the temple was properly cleansed and rededicated by His attendance at the feast of lights, commemorating this event (John 10:22)" David Guzik
 - b) There are all sorts of web sites and information that disagree with this interpretation of the 2,300 days. A majority of them believe that the 2,300-day prophecy was not fulfilled by Antiochus IV. They usually tie this verse to the Antichrist coming in the end. There are also *lots* of strange interpretations tied to 2,300 days.
 - i) Many of these commentaries see this as a 2,300 *year* prophecy. The problem is that the text does not say "days", it says "mornings and evenings". This is because when the Temple *did* exist, there were two major daily sacrifices given by the priests. One in the morning and the other in the evening.
 - a) Therefore, if you come across some of these strange interpretations that each of the 2,300 "days" represents something else, remember that the text doesn't say days, it "says mornings and evenings".
16. Verse 15: While I, Daniel, was watching the vision and trying to understand it, there before me stood one who looked like a man. ¹⁶ And I heard a man's voice from the Ulai calling, "Gabriel, tell this man the meaning of the vision."
 - a) We have two "voices" in these two verses. One is the angel Gabriel. The other is a "man's voice". I believe the latter refers to a preincarnate appearance of Jesus.
 - b) Gabriel is one of only 3 angels mentioned by name in the Bible. Gabriel will appear again in Chapter 9 and again to Mary announcing the birth of Jesus and also to the mother of John the Baptist (See Luke 1:19 and Luke 1:26).
 - i) The other two angels mentioned by name in the Bible are Michael and Satan. People tend to forget that Satan was "an angelic creature" before his rebellion. (Reference: See Ezekiel 28:13-14)
17. Verse 17: As he came near the place where I was standing, I was terrified and fell prostrate. "Son of man," he said to me, "understand that the vision concerns the time of the end."
 - a) The big debate question is "the time of the end *of what?*"
 - i) If it refers the "end" as in end-times, then the people who argue that this vision refers to the Antichrist and not Antiochus IV use this verse as support.
 - ii) If it refers to the "end" of the Temple being desecrated, then it *does* refer to Antiochus IV. Reading "the end" *in context* of the surrounding verses would support this argument.
 - iii) This is why many see a double-fulfillment of this prophecy.
18. Verse 18: While he was speaking to me, I was in a deep sleep, with my face to the ground. Then he touched me and raised me to my feet.
 - a) Daniel was "asleep" within the vision. Having Gabriel touch Daniel and raise him to his feet is another supporting verse for a Godly-vision as opposed to a bad dream.

19. Verse 19: He said: "I am going to tell you what will happen later in the time of wrath, because the vision concerns the appointed time of the end."²⁰ The two-horned ram that you saw represents the kings of Media and Persia.²¹ The shaggy goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between his eyes is the first king.²² The four horns that replaced the one that was broken off represent four kingdoms that will emerge from his nation but will not have the same power.
- a) Most of these verses are Gabriel explaining that the animals represent kingdoms. I have discussed them to death and there is no need to go further.
 - b) In Verse 19 it says, "later in the time of wrath" and "appointed time of the end", which again refers to either (or a double-fulfillment of) Antiochus IV or the Antichrist.
20. Verse 23: "In the latter part of their reign, when rebels have become completely wicked, a stern-faced king, a master of intrigue, will arise."²⁴ He will become very strong, but not by his own power. He will cause astounding devastation and will succeed in whatever he does. He will destroy the mighty men and the holy people.²⁵ He will cause deceit to prosper, and he will consider himself superior. When they feel secure, he will destroy many and take his stand against the Prince of princes. Yet he will be destroyed, but not by human power.
- a) Much of this is a repeat of what I have already discussed. To summarize, these verses are about the rise of Antiochus IV. His growth in power also caused his growth in his ego, and the destruction to anyone who would not worship him as a god.
 - b) History records he was ruthless, cunning, deceitful, claimed to be a god, killed people who worshipped in the temple, killed any owner of a Bible scroll, and killed those who tried to circumcise their children *along with the children!*
 - c) As I stated some pages back, the hard part for me to accept is "why did God allow this guy to rise to power in the first place?" The main answer is to show us the effects of sin in this world and to warn us of the dangers of sin to *our* lives.
 - d) Notice in Verse 24 it says "he will become strong...not by his power". This "hints" at the forces of Satan being behind the powers that be.
 - i) It is another double-reference to the Antichrist, *who is not* Satan-himself, but is being controlled and used by Satan.
 - ii) Remember that Satan's primary goal is to stop, foil, or just plain slow down God's redemptive plan. There have been many attempts in history to wipe out the Jewish nation. This was one of them. If Satan could wipe out the Jewish nation, the Messiah come not come *through* this nation.
 - iii) Satan is *still* trying to wipe out the Jewish nation today (reference Rev. 12:17). God's ultimate redemptive plan *involves* the nation of Israel (future to us) and thus he is still trying to destroy that nation.
21. Verse 26: "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."
- a) God is stating Daniel won't see this in his lifetime. God calls prophets to write down visions of the future for *our* learning.
 - i) "Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets." (Amos 3:7, NKJV)
22. Verse 27: I, Daniel, was exhausted and lay ill for several days. Then I got up and went about the king's business. I was appalled by the vision; it was beyond understanding.
- a) Gee, who wouldn't be exhausted after seeing this! ☺
 - i) I'm exhausted just writing about it. ☺
 - b) I believe Daniel had such a love for his nation that it hurt him to realize how much suffering would happen in the future.
 - c) That is a sign of our maturity as Christians: How much do you *hate* sin? How much do you *love* sinners? How much love do you *have* for your fellow Christians?

- d) Further, I think it shook Daniel to realize it was going to be a *long* time before the Messiah would come. It was the hope of every generation of Israelites that *their* generation would see the coming Messiah. It should also be the hope of every Christian that *their* generation would see Jesus as the *ruling* Messiah. That is what is meant by the prayer “thy kingdom come”.
 - i) God’s will, will be done. God said it, and it will happen. Yet, God wants us to pray *for* that to happen. God wants to work *through us*.
- e) Last, I’m impressed by the statement “I got up and went about the king’s business”.
 - i) God does not call us to sit in our room and prayerfully wait for Jesus to come.
 - ii) He expects us to be “about the kings’ business”!
 - iii) For Daniel, that meant his day-job working for a Gentile, pagan king.
 - iv) That’s it for us too. God calls *us* to be a witness to the world *while* living in the world. Being God’s witness means being out in the world *being* His witness!
- 23. Well, I bet you didn’t think I was going to finish Chapter 8 in one lesson did you? 😊
 - a) The animal visions are a lot to take in, but it teaches a lot about God’s sovereignty, God’s perfect knowledge about the future, and *our responsibilities* to accept that knowledge despite the pain it causes us and our lives here on earth.
- 24. Let’s pray: Oh heavenly father, we see the horrors and the violence inflicted upon innocent people due to sin manifesting itself in its worst form. Help us to remember the eternal perspective. We are here to do *your* will and not our own. Our rewards, our *true* peace will only come when the Prince of Peace arrives. In the meantime, we can have joy and comfort keeping our focus on you. Help us to be your witnesses to a dying world and to be an example to you as we “go about the king’s business” in this world. For we ask this in Jesus’ name, Amen.

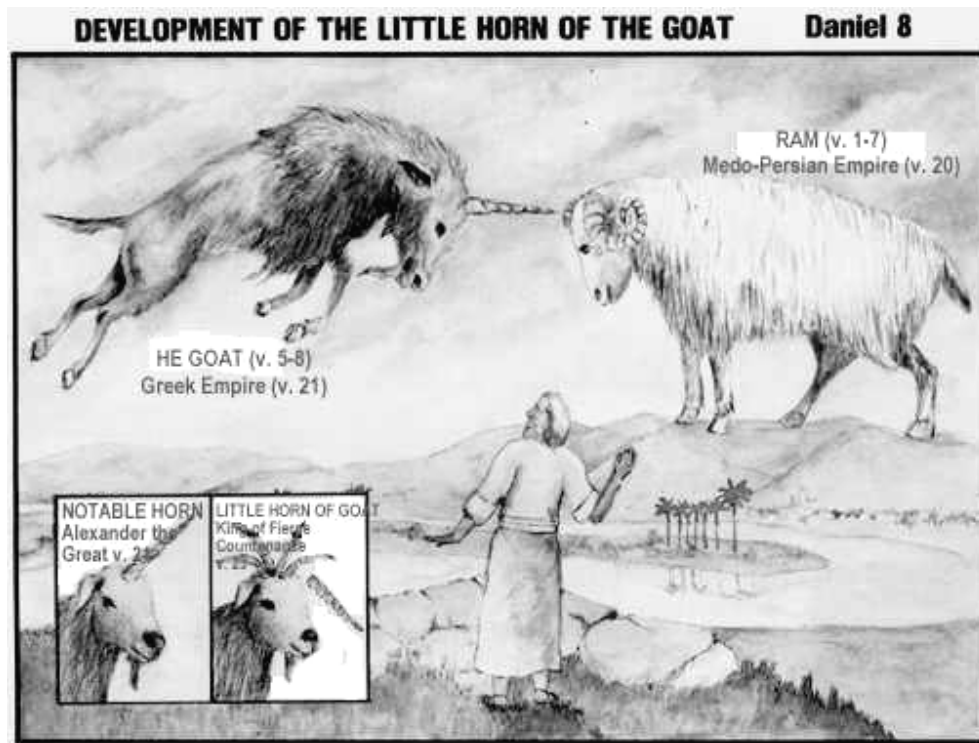
Bonus material.... Class note handouts...

Notes for Daniel- Chapter 8 (Page 1 of 5)

The Vision of the Ram and the Goat

A Summary of Chapter 8:

1. **Verses 1-12** are a vision of 1) a ram with 2 horns and 2) a goat with one large horn.
 - a) The vision takes place two years after the vision of Chapter 7. (550 BC)
 - b) Verses 1-2 tell where the vision took place (by a canal in the City of Susa).
 - c) Verses 3-4 talk about the vision of the ram with 2 horns.
 - d) Verses 5-8 talk about the one-horned goat that conquered the ram.
 - e) In Verse 8 four “other” horns took the place of the one “big horn” on this goat.
 - f) Verses 9-12 talk about “another” horn that came out of one of those 4 horns.
 - g) This “other” horn stops God-worship in the temple in the nation of Israel.
2. **Verses 13-27** are the interpretation of the vision.
 - a) In Verses 13-14, Daniel asks how long will this “other horn” rule over the Temple.
 - b) In Verses 15-18, we have two “men” explaining the vision. One is the angel Gabriel.
 - i. The other maybe a preincarnate appearance of Jesus.
 - c) Verses 19-22, Gabriel explains the vision:
 - i. The two-horned ram is the Medo-Persian Empire.
 - ii. The large horn of the goat is the King of Greece. (Alexander the Great)
 - iii. The four horns that replace the big-horn are 4 kings that replace the great king.
 1. (The Grecian Empire was broken into 4 parts)
 - d) Verses 23-25 talk about a king that will emerge from one of the 4 Grecian Empire “parts”.
 - i. Historically (to us), it referred a king named “Antiochus IV Epiphanies”.
 - ii. He conquered Israel, outlawed Judaism and demanded to be worshipped as God.
 - iii. Many believe this vision has a double-fulfillment in the Antichrist.
 - e) Verses 26-27 are the epilogue.
 - i. The Angel Gabriel said, “the vision is true”, but concerns the distant future.
 - ii. The vision made Daniel sick for a few days; then he got back to work.



Notes for Daniel- Chapter 8 (Page 2 of 5)

Introduction Part 1: Understanding future-prophecy in the Bible

1. God uses word-pictures as opposed to direct explanations.
 - a. Word-pictures help our minds to “think about” these visions.
 - b. Our minds remember word-pictures better than facts and figures.
2. About 30% of the Bible is future-prophecy. It validates the Bible as the word of God.
 - a. It validates people like Daniel as a prophet of God.
3. Prophecy is not just direct predictions. It is also patterns.
 - a. God uses patterns of the text as “clues” for future prophecy.
 - b. This is taught in both Judaism and Christianity.
 - c. In today’s lesson we will read about a future king who harms Israel.
 - i. It is also a pattern to learn about the Antichrist.
4. Prophecy often has double-fulfillments in the Bible.
 - a. God told David he would have a son who would be a great ruler.
 - i. The “first” fulfillment is about his direct son Solomon.
 - ii. The “second” fulfillment is about his descendant Jesus.
 - b. Jesus said, “So when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not” (let the reader understand), “Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. (Mark 13:14 NKJV)
 - i. The “abomination of desolation” is when Antiochus IV “ruined” the Temple.
 1. That event was prior to Jesus’ first coming.
 - ii. Chapter 11, which also talks about Antiochus IV, uses the term “abomination of desolation”.
 - iii. A bible-wise Jew living in Jesus time would know that the phrase the “abomination of desolation” refers to the time when Antiochus IV desecrated the Temple (approx 170-165 BC).
 - iv. Jesus said, “when you see”, i.e., future. Jesus is speaking of a second-fulfillment.

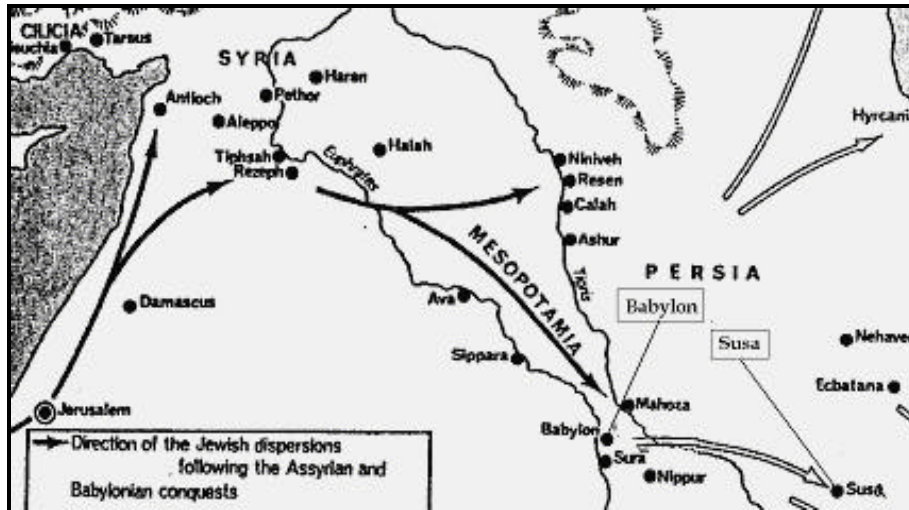
Introduction Part 2: Why does God allow evil people like Antiochus IV to exist?

5. Daniel saw all of this while Israel was in ruins. He was hoping for Jesus’ immediate coming.
 - a. Instead he realized it would be a long time with this horrible man coming first.
6. God allows horrible and evil things to happen in this world. It is the long-term effect of sin in the world. Sin leads to more sin, and finally to horrible deeds that are too grotesque to think about.
 - a. Our problem is we get mad at God because He doesn’t judge people or solve issues on our timetable. The judgment often comes after the sinner is dead.
 - b. We must remember to have the “eternal perspective” on judgment and evil-people.
 - c. Jesus himself commented on this: “I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him.” (Luke 12:4-5, NIV)
7. The great lesson to learn from Chapter 8 is that God is sovereign. God allows kings to rise to power. Some are good and some are evil. All of them eventually fall, and God is still on the throne. We can’t explain all evils and all mysteries, which is why we walk by faith.
8. The second great lesson is: we as Christians have to live in a sinful world. Jesus never promises us “all blessings” in our lifetime on earth. If that were the case, people would not turn to Jesus out of necessity, but just for the blessings.

Notes for Daniel- Chapter 8 (Page 3 of 5)

Verses 1-2: The “Where” and “When” of this Vision

1. Verse 1: "In the third year of King Belshazzar's reign": Two years after Chapter 7.
 - a. It is also prior to the fall of King Belshazzar in Chapter 5 of Daniel
2. Daniel lived in Babylon. The vision is in Susa, which is a few hundred miles away.
 - a. Susa became the capitol of the Medo-Persian Empire (Reference: Esther 1:2).
3. Either Daniel saw this vision in Babylon, or was in Susa on business at that time.



Verse 3-4: The Rise of the Medo-Persian Empire; (This is the vision of the 2-horned ram.)

1. Verse 3 says, “One horn was longer, and the other grew up later.”
 - a. History records that when the Medo-Persian alliance began, the Medes were by far the stronger of the two parties.
 - b. Later, the Persians became the dominant force.
2. Verse 4 says the ram charged 1) west, 2) north, and 3) south.
 - a. History records this is exactly the way the Medo-Persian Empire grew. It never grew to the east. First they attacked the city-states to the west; then they attacked to the north, and finally they attacked to the south.
3. The king’s crowns of the Medo-Persian kings were helmets with ram-horns!
(Source: 4th century historian Ammianus Marcellinus)
 - a. This would help Daniel/Israelites recognize prophecy being fulfilled.
4. All of this took place within a year before “writing on the wall” /Death of King Belshazzar.

Verse 5-8: The Rise of the Grecian Empire; (The vision of the 1-horned goat; it then has 4 horns.)

5. The prominent horn historically was Alexander the Great.
 - a. History records when Alexander the Great was in his 20's, he led the Grecian army. By the age of 33, he laid in bed weeping, as there were no more worlds left to conquer.
6. Verse 8 says, "but at the height of his power his large horn was broken off".
 - a. History records he became a drunkard after this. He died of pneumonia at age 33.
7. Verse 8 says, "In its place four prominent horns grew up toward the four winds of heaven".
 - a. When asked on his deathbed what to do about the kingdom, Alexander the Great just said, "Give it to the strong". Alexander had 4 generals under his command. Each took a quarter part of the Empire.
 - b. Each of the 4 generals started their own "mini-Greek Empire". It was never united again.

Notes for Daniel- Chapter 8 (Page 4 of 5)

Verse 9: Out of the 4 kings (4 generals) came “another” horn that rules over “The Beautiful Land”.

1. The “beautiful land” is a reference to Israel.
 - a. This title for Israel is only used in Daniel. It is assumed to mean Israel.
 - b. God created everything, yet this piece of real estate (Israel) belongs to Him!
 - c. Israelites don’t “own” the land Israel. They have the right to occupy the land as long as they are obedient.
 - d. "But if you turn away and forsake the decrees and commands I (God) have given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them, then I will uproot Israel (the people) from my land, which I have given them, and will reject this temple I have consecrated for my Name. (2nd Chronicles 7:19-20a NIV)
2. The descendant of 1 of the 4 generals (“4 horns”) was Antiochus IV Epiphanies (“another” horn).
 - a. The word “Epiphanies” is a title and not part of his name.
The word is similar to the word “epitomé”, as in the “epitomé of power”.

Verse 10: It grew (this leader over Israel) until it reached the host of the heavens, and it threw some of the starry host down to the earth and trampled on them.

3. The terms “host of the heavens” and “starry hosts” refers armies of angels in service To God.
 - a. "Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne with all the host of heaven standing around him on his right and on his left." (1 Kings 22:19 NIV)
 - b. “You alone are the LORD. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry hosts, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. “(Neh. 9:6a NIV)
4. Again we have the possibility of a double fulfillment...Can this refer to the Antichrist?
 - a. In Revelation “stars” again refer to angels:
 - i. The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches. (Revelation 1:20 NIV)
 - b. Satan took 1/3 of the “stars of heaven with him in rebellion against God.”
 - i. Revelation 12 describes Satan with this sentence: “His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth.” (Revelation 12:4a, NIV).
5. The point is that Verse 10’s reference to “throwing some of the starry hosts down to earth” may refer to Satan and his angelic followers rebelling against God as described in Rev. Chapter 12.
6. There are commentators that argue that this vision refers only to Antiochus IV. They see the “starry hosts of heaven” as being the Jewish believers in God at that time.

Verses 11-12: It (“the horn”) set itself up to be as great as the Prince of the host.

1. The term “Prince of the host” is only used here in Daniel. If you think of God the Father as being the Ruler over the host of Heaven, I personally see “The Prince” as a title for the Messiah/Jesus.
 - a. This may be another double-fulfillment reference when the Antichrist will speak out against God.
 - b. Historically, Antioch IV will claim to be a god. Archeologists have found coins minted with Antioch IV’s inscription upon it claiming to be a god.
2. In direct context, I believe the term “Prince of the host” refers to the High Priest of Israel.
 - a. The verse says he “took away the daily sacrifice”.
 - b. The high priest was in charge of those sacrifices.
 - c. Therefore, being “as great as the Prince of the Host” was when Antioch IV demanded that the animal sacrifices be stopped, as he demanded Israel to worship him.

Notes for Daniel- Chapter 8 (Page 5 of 5)

Verse 13: Daniel is asking in effect: “when does all this happen”?

1. Daniel sees this vision about the Temple rebuilt. It didn't exist during the time of this vision.
2. Not only does the Messiah not come then and there;
3. But the Temple is desecrated by this evil future ruler, who:
 - a. Demands to be worshipped as God;
 - b. Murders those who disagree with him, and
 - c. Stops the animal sacrifices in the Temple.

Verse 14: God answers Daniel's prayer: It will take 2,300 “mornings & evenings” to restore the Temple.

1. We know the historic reference to this prophecy from the Book “1st Maccabees”.
 - a. This book is part of the Old Testament Roman Catholic Bible.
 - b. This is one of 14 additional Old Testament books that is part of the Roman Catholic Bible.
 - c. The New Testament is identical for all branches/denominations of Christianity.
 - d. Both Judaism and Protestant Christianity reject these 14 books as not inspired by God.
 - e. However 1st and 2nd Maccabees are considered historically accurate but not God inspired.
2. The Jews revolted against Antiochus IV desecrating the Temple.
 - a. The temple was “cleansed” and rededicated on December 25, 165 BC.
 - b. This date is supported by a verse in 1st Maccabees; “Early in the morning on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month, that is, the month of Chislev, in the year one hundred and forty-eight,” 1st Maccabees 4:52; NAB (That year is 165 BC on our calendar).
 - c. The persecution began 2,300 days earlier.
 - d. Jews to this day celebrate the cleansing of the Temple. It is the holiday of Hanukah.
 - e. “Jesus himself recognized that the temple was properly cleansed and rededicated by His attendance at the feast of lights, commemorating this event. (John 10:22)” David Guzik

Verse 17: Daniel was told this vision “concerns the time of the end”; Question – the end of what?

1. If it refers to the end of the Temple being desecrated, then it does refer to Antiochus IV. Reading “the end” in context of the surrounding verses would support this argument.
2. If it refers the “end” as in end-times, then the people who argue that this vision refers to the Antichrist and not Antiochus IV use this verse as support.

A question to ponder about Antiochus IV:

1. History records Antiochus IV was ruthless, cunning, deceitful, claimed to be a god, killed people who worshipped in the temple, killed any owner of a Bible scroll, and killed those who tried to circumcise their children along with the children!
“Why did God allow this guy to rise to power in the first place?”
 - a. The main answer is to show us the effects of sin in this world and to warn us of the dangers of sin to our lives. Much evil will transpire before the return of the Lord.

Verse 26: God tells Daniel this vision is about the distant future (not in Daniel's lifetime).

1. God calls prophets to write down visions of the future for our learning.
 - a. “Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.” (Amos 3:7, NKJV)

Verse 27: Daniel rested for a few days after this vision, and then went back to “the king's business”.

1. Daniel had such a love for his nation that it hurt him to realize how much suffering would happen in the future.
2. God does not call us to sit in our room and prayerfully wait for Jesus to come.
3. He expects us to be “about the kings' business!” The “king” we serve, is Jesus Christ!

