

DANIEL CHAPTER 8 PROPHECY AND FULFILLMENT

Daniel chapter 7 contains the prophecy of the 4 beasts that rule the earth, the fourth being the dreadful beast. The scroll judgements in Revelation, including the trumpet judgements are against the dreadful beast. Daniel 8 shows the transition of the second and third beast, with another that had a small empire near the holy land. The rise of the sea beast in chapter 13 are components of the four beasts of Daniel 7, so understanding Daniel 7 & 8 will help decipher the sea beast. Daniel 7 also explains the 10 horns of power that were given to the sea beast of Revelation 13, then given back to the dragon beast of chapter 20, but described in chapter 17. Finally, there is the different horn with eyes and a mouth that speaks blasphemy. This horn is a religious power that takes 3 horns of power, which translates to the 7 heads of the European sea beast of chapter 13. To better understand the language of Daniel 7, we can look to how prophecy was interpreted in chapter 8 and use those findings to be able to define beasts and horns in Daniel 7 and in Revelation.

We will start with the two-horned ram, standing by the canal that was in Babylon.

MEDO-PERSIA

Daniel 8:3 Then I lifted up my eyes and saw a ram with two horns standing beside the canal. The horns were long, but one was longer than the other, and the longer one grew up later. 4 I saw the ram charging toward the west and the north and the south. No animal could stand against him, and there was no deliverance from his power. He did as he pleased and became great.

Daniel 8:20 The two-horned ram that you saw represents the kings of Media and Persia.

3 and 20) The ram with 2 horns is the kings of Media and Persia according to Daniel 8:20. This is the same empire in Daniel 7 described as beast #2, a bear, raised up on one side, with 3 ribs in its mouth between its teeth, it gorged itself on flesh

GREECE

5 As I was contemplating all this, suddenly a goat with a prominent horn between his eyes came out of the west, crossing the surface of the entire earth without touching the ground. 6 He came toward the two-horned ram I had seen standing beside the canal and rushed at him with furious power. 7 I saw him approach the ram in a rage against him, and he struck the ram and shattered his two horns. The ram was powerless to stand against him, and the goat threw him to the ground and trampled him, and no one could deliver the ram from his power. 8 Thus the goat became very great, but at the height of his power, his large horn was broken off, and four prominent horns came up in its place, pointing toward the four winds of heaven.

21 The shaggy goat represents the king of Greece, and the large horn between his eyes is the first king. 22 The four horns that replaced the broken one represent four kingdoms that will rise from that nation but will not have the same power.

5 and 21) The goat with one horn between the eyes was Greece, according to the angel.

This is beast #3 in Daniel 7, described as a leopard, with 4 wings on it's back like a bird. It had 4 heads and was given authority to rule

SELEUCID EMPIRE

9 From one of these horns a little horn emerged and grew extensively toward the south and the east and toward the Beautiful Land. 10 It grew as high as the host of heaven, and it cast down some of the host and some of the stars to the earth and trampled them. 11 It magnified itself, even to the Prince of the host; it removed His daily sacrifice and overthrew the place of His sanctuary. 12 And in the rebellion, the host and the daily sacrifice were given over to the horn, and it flung truth to the ground and prospered in whatever it did.

23 In the latter part of their reign, when the rebellion has reached its full measure, an insolent king, skilled in intrigue, will come to the throne. 24 His power will be great, but it will not be his own. He will cause terrible destruction and succeed in whatever he does. He will destroy the mighty men along with the holy people. 25 Through his craft and by his hand, he will cause deceit to prosper, and in his own mind he will make himself great. In a time of peace he will destroy many, and he will even stand against the Prince of princes. Yet he will be broken off, but not by human hands. 26 The vision of the evenings and the mornings that has been spoken is true. Now you must seal up the vision, for it concerns the distant future."

In the middle east, the next empire to rise after Greece was the Seleucid Empire.

This is NOT the dreadful beast that came after Greece in Daniel 7. The dreadful beast "trampled the whole earth" Daniel 7:23, this beast comes from 1 of the 4 horns of the Greek goat. None of this description describes Rome.

From biblehub study bible: **The two-horned ram that you saw**

This phrase refers to the vision Daniel had, where he saw a ram with two horns. In biblical symbolism, animals often represent kingdoms or empires. The ram is a fitting symbol for the Medo-Persian Empire, known for its power and conquests. The two horns signify the dual nature of the empire, composed of the Medes and the Persians. Historically, the ram was a symbol associated with Persia, and Persian kings wore a ram's head as a crown during battles.

represents the kings of Media and Persia

The Medo-Persian Empire was a significant power in the ancient Near East, succeeding the Babylonian Empire. The "kings" here refer to the rulers of this dual kingdom, with Cyrus the Great being the most notable, as he united the Medes and Persians. This empire is crucial in biblical history, as it allowed the Jewish exiles to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple, fulfilling prophecies such as those in Isaiah 44:28 and 45:1.

Reasons why a ram would be used - Cyrus was the one who decreed the return of the Jews, he was a fair ruler and didn't oppress the lands he conquered. A ram is a clean and acceptable animal.

The ram with two horns did not lose any horns or have them change when the leader of the empire changed. A horn can be a specific man, as we see with the broken horn of Greece describing Alexander the Great, or a set of rulers in the same office. The bible study mentions Cyrus as the ruler of Persia, one of the horns, but Darius was ruler of the empire when Alexander the Great attacked in verse 6. The Persian Empire had 12 primary kings.

From biblehub study bible: **The shaggy goat represents the king of Greece**

The imagery of the shaggy goat is symbolic, representing the kingdom of Greece. In the context of Daniel's vision, this goat is contrasted with the ram, which symbolizes the Medo-Persian Empire. Historically, Greece rose to power after the decline of the Medo-Persian Empire, aligning with the prophetic sequence of empires in Daniel's visions. The use of a goat is significant, as goats were common in the region and often associated with strength and agility, characteristics that describe the rapid expansion of the Greek Empire under its leadership.

and the large horn between his eyes is the first king

The large horn signifies the first king of the Greek Empire, historically recognized as Alexander the Great. Alexander's conquests were swift and extensive, fulfilling the prophecy of a powerful leader who would dominate the known world. His reign marked the beginning of the Hellenistic period, which had a profound impact on culture, language, and politics in the ancient world. The imagery of the horn is consistent with biblical symbolism, where horns often represent power and authority. Alexander's untimely death led to the division of his empire, a theme further explored in subsequent verses and chapters of Daniel. .

and four prominent horns came up in its place

After Alexander's death, his empire was divided among his four generals: Cassander, Lysimachus, Seleucus, and Ptolemy. These generals, often referred to as the Diadochi, established their own kingdoms, which are symbolized by the "four prominent horns." This division of the empire fulfilled the prophecy and set the stage for future conflicts and developments in the Hellenistic world.

pointing toward the four winds of heaven

The phrase "four winds of heaven" indicates the geographical spread of the four kingdoms that emerged from Alexander's empire. Each general took control of a different region, spreading out in various directions: Cassander in Macedonia and Greece, Lysimachus in Thrace and Asia Minor, Seleucus in the Near East, and Ptolemy in Egypt. This dispersion highlights the fragmentation and reach of the Hellenistic influence across the ancient world.

Crossing the entire earth is symbolic, it describes the area around Babylon, where Daniel was prophesying. Russia, India and China all had empires that aren't included in the "entire earth" that Bible prophecy speaks of. The earth is the area where God's family is located. Greece was a vast empire so using "the entire earth" would mean that the empire was far and wide.

The phrase "without touching the ground" can mean the speed at which he conquered, but more likely the use of an innovative navy to conquer coastal regions. Greece was certainly famed for its formidable fleet of ships. Also the phrase "rushed him with furious power" foretells how Alexander the Great conquered with brute force as opposed to Cyrus who used diplomacy and alliances to gain power.

The horns were an office on the two-horned ram, but here it describes a man who ruled Greece. At the height of power, the horn was broken off - Alexander the Great died at 33 years. These four prominent horns are the wings of the leopard beast in Daniel 7. They are the Diadochi, 4 divisions of the Greek empire after the 4 generals divided the land: Cassander (Macedon/Greece), Lysimachus (Thrace and parts of Asia Minor), Ptolemy (Egypt), and Seleucus (Syria, Mesopotamia, and the East).

from biblehub study bible - It grew as high as the host of heaven

This phrase refers to the little horn, which represents a powerful and arrogant ruler. In the context of Daniel 8, this is often interpreted as Antiochus IV Epiphanes, a Seleucid king known for his persecution of the Jewish people. The "host of heaven" symbolizes the people of God, often depicted as stars or heavenly bodies in biblical literature (Genesis 15:5; Revelation 12:4). The imagery suggests an attempt to challenge divine authority and elevate oneself to a god-like status, reflecting the hubris of rulers who oppose God's people.

and it cast down some of the host and some of the stars to the earth

This action signifies the persecution and oppression of God's people. Historically, Antiochus IV desecrated the Jewish temple and sought to eradicate Jewish worship, fulfilling this prophecy in a literal sense. The "stars" can also symbolize leaders or prominent figures among God's people, indicating that the persecution was not only widespread but also targeted those in positions of spiritual leadership. This imagery is echoed in Revelation 12:4, where the dragon casts a third of the stars to the earth, symbolizing Satan's attack on God's people.

and trampled them

The trampling indicates severe oppression and desecration. Antiochus IV's actions, such as the abomination of desolation in the temple, are historical examples of this trampling. This phrase also foreshadows future persecutions faced by God's people, serving as a reminder of the ongoing spiritual battle between the forces of good and evil. The trampling of the host and stars can be seen as a type of the ultimate persecution faced by Christ, who was rejected and crucified, yet through His resurrection, He triumphed over all powers and authorities (Colossians 2:15).25).

Yet he will be broken off, but not by human hands

This indicates a divine intervention in the downfall of the oppressor, suggesting that his end will come through God's power rather than human effort. Historically, Antiochus IV died suddenly of disease, which many see as fulfillment of this prophecy. The phrase "not by human hands" emphasizes God's sovereignty and the futility of human pride against divine will. This mirrors the fate of the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, which was destroyed by a stone "not cut by human hands" (Daniel 2:34), symbolizing God's ultimate authority over earthly kingdoms.

This horn is the Seleucid Empire, which eventually grew as high as the host of heaven. From 312 BC to 63 BC there were 30 kings of that dynasty. Although there were many kings, most of the verses here describe the most notorious king, Antiochus IV Epiphanes. This conflict with the Israelites is explained in 1 and 2 Maccabees.

The phrase "cast down the host" is similar to phrases in Revelation such as "stars falling from heaven." See here that it pertains to people in leadership and not literal stars falling to the earth. Antiochus IV Epiphanes assassinated and executed multiple High Priests during his reign. He also made his own pagan sacrifices in the temple, forbade the observance of the Sabbath, outlawed circumcision under penalty of death, and burned the copies of the Torah in the streets fulfilling the phrase "removed His daily sacrifice and overthrew the place of His sanctuary" and "flung the truth to the ground."

There are many more phrases that can be interpreted, but we see the pattern here enough to look at Daniel 7 to define the dreadful beast, and the beasts of Revelation 13 and 20.