

Daily Bible Readings

Our Read-Ahead for: 19 March 2023

Gabriel's Interpretation

Monday: A Guide into the Future (**Exodus 23:20-25**)

Tuesday: A Messenger of Rebuke (**Judges 2:1-5**)

Wednesday: A Messenger with Good News (**Luke 1:8-20**)

Thursday: A Messenger from God (**Luke 1:26-38**)

Friday: A Helper in Understanding (**Daniel 8:13-18**)

Saturday: A Helper in Response to Prayer (**Daniel 9:20-27**)

Sunday: A Helper in Facing the Future (**Daniel 8:19-16**)

Daniel's Prayer

Lesson Text: **Daniel 8:19-26**

Bible Background: **Daniel 8**

Devotional Reading • **Psalm 91:1-12**

Keep in Mind: *“And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days”. (Daniel 8:26 KJV)*

Aim for Change

“By the end of the lesson, we will: **EXPLAIN** why good decisions yield good outcomes; **RECALL** a time when we needed help from others; and **VISUALIZE** a better future in God.”

In Focus

“Sometimes it’s hard to know what to expect when we are overwhelmed and confused. In today’s lesson, we will see how Gabriel helped Daniel understand his vision.”

Focal Verses

Daniel 8:19-26 KJV

19 And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be.

20 The ram which thou saw having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia.

21 And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.

22 Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.

23 And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.

24 And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.

25 And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.

26 And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days.”

The Lesson

I. The People, Places and Times

Gabriel. An angel sent by God to deliver messages. He announced the birth of John the Baptist to Zechariah and the birth of Jesus to Mary. In our text, he was sent to Daniel to explain his visions.

Media and Persia. The ram in Daniel’s vision represents the [Medo-Persian Empire](#). Its two horns represent [Kings Darius and Cyrus](#). The Persians overthrew Media under Cyrus in 558 B.C. and unlike other conquests, the Medes were appointed to stations of high honor and importance. The two nations seemed blended into one.”

II. Background

After Daniel’s vision of the four beasts, he sees another. This vision is about a ram, a goat, and a little horn. The ram had two horns on his head, one higher than the other, and was standing by the river. He pushed northward, southward, and westward and no other animal could defeat him. As Daniel was considering the vision of the ram, a goat with one horn came from the West and charged the ram. He tore the ram’s two horns, making it powerless and defeating it. The goat lost his one horn and four horns grew in its place. Out of one of the four, a little horn grew toward heaven and cast down some of the angelic host. The vision and God baffled Daniel sent the angel Gabriel to interpret it.

In Depth

1. God Sends Daniel the Help That He Needs (Daniel 8:19–22) Daniel fell on his face when Gabriel arrived, thinking his end had come. But Gabriel stood him upright and explained that Daniel’s vision foretold what should happen at the end times ([eschatology](#)) of the world. With Gabriel’s help, Daniel understood that the vision was one of comfort to those who live in calamitous times knowing that there should be an end to them.

Gabriel explained that the ram's two horns are the princes of Media and Persia. The horn that grew up first was shorter than the second one. The second and longest horn represented the kingdom of Persia, which rose last and was more eminent than Media. With its horns, the ram charged westward (toward Babylon, Syria, Greece, and Asia), northward (toward the Lydians, Armenians, and Scythians), and southward (toward Arabia, Ethiopia, and Egypt). The Persians launched attacks against all these nations to enlarge their dominion. The Persian Empire became so great that no one could withstand it, as the ram had in the vision.

The goat Daniel saw coming from the West represents Greece, and the horn between its eyes was Alexander the Great. In the vision, the goat did not touch the ground, and Gabriel explained that Alexander the Great had moved so lightly that he met with little or no opposition. In effect, he went to conquer the world. It is said, Alexander the Great pushed his conquests so fast and with so much fury that no one had courage enough to "stand against him. He attacked Persia with three magnificent battles, killing more than 600,000 men and gaining absolute control of the Persian Empire. In the vision, the goat trampled the ram and broke its two horns. Just as soon as the goat had become great, his horn broke and grew into four other horns. Alexander's kingdom divided itself into four parts, the kingdoms of Syria, Egypt, Asia, and Greece. But a small horn grew out of the four, and became persecutor of the church and the people of God."

God Can and Does Interpret Dreams (Daniel 8:23–26) Verses 23-25 describe the characteristics and the personality of the "small horn," which was Antiochus Epiphanes. Matthew Henry writes that Antiochus was seen as small because he "was in his original contemptible; there were others between him and the kingdom ... and (he) had been for some time a hostage and prisoner at Rome, whence he made his escape, and ... got the kingdom" (Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible, Vol. IV—Isaiah to Malachi, 1079). He seized Egypt, invaded Persia and Armenia, but ran roughshod over the Jews. According to the vision, Antiochus set himself against God, heaven, and God's people. He forbade the daily sacrifices and set his own image on the temple. It was said he would be destroyed but not by hands. He would not die in war or be killed; he would be given over to the living God. And it was so. When the Jews cast out Antiochus' image out of the temple, he vowed to make Jerusalem a burial ground. No sooner had he spoken the words, than he was struck with an incurable disease. At first, he continued to threaten the Jews. However, as his illness grew worse, he tried to bargain with God to let the Jews worship freely. Finally, before his death, he submitted to God and wrote letters of apology for setting himself against the Lord.

Daniel was asked to seal the vision, for it would be more useful to us who live in the last days.

III. Take Aways

IV. Closing Prayer