



“Six Years”

The story of Antiochus Epiphanes IV

Also known as the ‘**Antichrist of Old**’ • A Study of Daniel 8, Part One

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All Scriptures are printed verbatim with translations noted. • When Pastor Joe’s commentary is added, God’s Word will be printed in regular faced text with commentary in the smaller faced text. • Biblical words, underlined with dots, are explained in the brackets. Pastor Joe’s email is Joe@southreno.com.

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.” - Daniel 8:26, NIV

Study section

Distant History

1. A Lopsided Ram (Medo-Persian Empire; vv. 1-4)

Daniel 8:1–4, NLT - [Dan 8 returns to the Hebrew language; this chapter takes place two years after Daniel 7] ¹During the third year of King Belshazzar’s reign [Belshazzar was Nebuchadnezzar’s grandson, he was the one who threw a drunken orgy, abused the Jewish temple vessels and saw the handwriting on the wall (Dan 5)—all in one night], I, Daniel, saw another vision, following the one that had already appeared to me. ²In this vision I was at the fortress of Susa, in the province of Elam, standing beside the Ulai River. [near modern day Kuwait, 150 miles north of the mouth of the Persian Gulf; the capital of Persia, in that day]. ³As I looked up, I saw a ram with two long horns standing beside the river. One of the horns was longer than the other, even though it had grown later than the other one. ⁴The ram butted everything out of his way to the west, to the north, and to the south, and no one could stand against him or help his victims. He did as he pleased and became very great.

2. A Hairy He-Goat (Greek Empire under Alex. the Great; vv. 5-7)

Daniel 8:5–7, NLT - ⁵While I was watching, suddenly a male goat [Greek Empire] appeared from the west, crossing the land so swiftly that he didn’t

even touch the ground. This goat, which had one very large horn [Alexander the Great] between its eyes, ⁶headed toward the two-horned ram [Persian Empire] that I had seen standing beside the river, rushing at him in a rage. ⁷The goat charged furiously at the ram and struck him, breaking off both his horns. Now the ram was helpless, and the goat knocked him down and trampled him. No one could rescue the ram from the goat’s power.

3. Little Horn’s Syndrome (Alex. the Great’s Four Generals; v. 8)

Daniel 8:8, NLT - ⁸The goat [Alexander the Great] became very powerful. But at the height of his power, his large horn was broken off [Alexander died at age 33, partially because of his battle with alcohol]. In the large horn’s place grew four prominent horns [Alexander had no plan for succession, so his four generals (Cassandra would rule Greece; Lysimachus would control Asia Minor; Seleucids would control Syria; and Ptolemy would rule over Egypt) split up his kingdom] pointing in the four directions of the earth. [The Jewish historian, Josephus, shares a fascinating incident about Alexander the Great. As Alexander and his army approached Jerusalem, he was planning to destroy the city. Josephus writes that while Alexander was considering destroying the city, the high priest went out with a scroll of Daniel 8 and explained to him that he and his army (the goat) were destined by God of the Hebrews to conquer the Ram (the Persians). This account says Alexander was so impressed that instead of destroying the city of Jerusalem, he enriched it and then bypassed it on his way to capture and control Egypt. [NOTE: Daniel predicted all of this 300 year before it happened.]

4. Antiochus Epiphanes IV—The Antichrist of the OT (vv.9-12)

Daniel 8:9–12, NLT - ⁹Then from one of the prominent horns came a small horn [Antiochus ruled over the Seleucid Dynasty from 171-165BC—“Six Years” of severe persecution for Israel; VERY IMPORTANT: The “little horn” represented the Antichrist in Ch. 7. Scholars believe Antiochus is a foreshadowing of the ‘distant future’ Antichrist] whose power grew very great. It extended toward the south and the east and toward the glorious land of Israel. ¹⁰Its power reached to the heavens, where it attacked the heavenly army, throwing some of the heavenly beings and some of the stars to the ground and trampling them. ¹¹It even challenged the Commander of heaven’s army by canceling the daily sacrifices [i.e., sacrificial system] offered to him and by destroying his [second, Zerubbabel’s] Temple. ¹²The army of heaven was restrained from responding to this rebellion. So the daily sacrifice was halted, and truth was overthrown. The horn succeeded in everything it did. [“The Miracle of Hanukkah” happened on December 25, 165BC—the Jews commemorate the retaking of Jerusalem and the cleansing of the Temple by Judas Maccabaeus in the festival of Hanukkah. According to tradition when the Jews got ready to light the menorah in the temple, they only had enough oil in the cruise for one day, yet the light kept shining for eight days. The temple was then re-consecrated on December 25, 165 BC. Antiochus died on this day in 165BC!]

Life Application Section

- A. Alexander the Great is a picture marked by personal failure.
- B. Antiochus (past) is a prototype of the Antichrist (future).
- C. Daniel is a portrait of steadfast service and faith in tough times.