



CAPITOL COMMISSION[®]

God Precisely Predicts the Governments

JUNE 5-7, 2024

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Daniel 8:1-7 *In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me—to me, Daniel—after the one that appeared to me the first time. 2) I saw in the vision, and it so happened while I was looking, that I was in Shushan, the citadel, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision that I was by the River Ulai. 3) Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and there, standing beside the river, was a ram which had two horns, and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last. 4) I saw the ram pushing westward, northward, and southward, so that no animal could withstand him; nor was there any that could deliver from his hand, but he did according to his will and became great. 5) And as I was considering, suddenly a male goat came from the west, across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. 6) Then he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing beside the river, and ran at him with furious power. 7) And I saw him confronting the ram; he was moved with rage against him, attacked the ram, and broke his two horns. There was no power in the ram to withstand him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled him; and there was no*

one that could deliver the ram from his hand. (NKJV)

AND HE SAID, "LOOK, I AM MAKING KNOWN TO YOU WHAT SHALL HAPPEN IN THE LATTER TIME OF THE INDIGNATION; FOR AT THE APPOINTED TIME THE END SHALL BE. THE RAM WHICH YOU SAW, HAVING THE TWO HORNS—THEY ARE THE KINGS OF MEDIA AND PERSIA. AND THE MALE GOAT IS THE KINGDOM OF GREECE. THE LARGE HORN THAT IS BETWEEN ITS EYES IS THE FIRST KING." DANIEL 8:19-21

What very significant event occurred in the third year of King Belshazzar? Was Daniel very surprised to receive this vision? What was the significance of Shushan, the citadel? Why is the ram beside the River Ulai? Which had the first empire, the Medes or the Persians? Why doesn't the ram push eastward? Is this ram initially invincible? Who is this "notable horn"? Why is he so furious against the ram? What is Gabriel's emphasis?

FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- JUNE 12-14: DANIEL 8:8-14 *THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION*
- JUNE 19-21: DANIEL 8:15-22 *THE KINGDOMS EXPLAINED*

Because Daniel was a statesman who walked with God in diligent prayer three times a day, God revealed to him in a second dream, all the world empires that are to come, climaxing in the final empire of Christ as He will rule and reign with His saints forever. Two years later, in "the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar," about 550 BC, the rising Persian king, Cyrus, defeated his grandfather Astyages, the king of the Medes, who had tried to kill Cyrus as a baby, but instead he was adopted and raised by shepherds. It is likely that Daniel went to Shushan to congratulate Cyrus and make diplomatic ties with him as a wise statesman representing the Babylonian Empire.

BIBLE STUDIES

WEDNESDAY @ 8:30 AM—BIBLE STUDY—FREDERICKSBURG—106 CARTER ST & NOON—WOODBIDGE—BOB EVANS, 14490 SMOKETOWN RD.

THURSDAY @ 8:00 AM—BIBLE STUDY—RICHMOND—SHONEY'S, HULL & COURTHOUSE & NOON—LYNCHBURG—PANERA BREAD, 3901 OLD FOREST RD.

FRIDAY @ 8:30 AM—BIBLE STUDY—SUFFOLK—CHICK-FIL-A, 6212 COLLEGE DRIVE, NEAR HAMPTON ROADS CROSSING

Virginia

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WHO SAYS OF CYRUS 'HE IS MY SHEPHERD, AND HE SHALL PERFORM ALL MY PLEASURE, SAYING TO JERUSALEM, "YOU SHALL BE BUILT," AND TO THE TEMPLE, "YOUR FOUNDATIONS SHALL BE LAID."'

ISAIAH 44:28

I. ASPIRING CYRUS

DANIEL 8:1-2

Nebuchadnezzar's father had allied with the Medes to defeat the Assyrians, and Nebuchadnezzar had joined his father in battle defeating the Assyrians and preventing their empire, thus becoming the head of the first world empire. Now King Belshazzar, his son, would have been uncomfortable with the news that his ally was defeated by his grandson, but no doubt he prefers to make Cyrus an ally rather than an enemy. Such difficult diplomacy would require his wisest men, including Daniel. But only Daniel would have known that a century and a half prior, through Isaiah the prophet, God had specifically named Cyrus as the deliverer of His people. Understandably, Daniel would have been excited to make this trip to the Persian Capital, Shushan, to meet the man who would deliver his people after seventy years of captivity. But he never would have expected that God would show him a detailed vision regarding the Medo-Persian Empire.

THUS SAYS THE LORD TO HIS ANOINTED, TO CYRUS, WHOSE RIGHT HAND I HAVE HELD—TO SUBDUE NATIONS BEFORE HIM AND LOOSE THE ARMOR OF KINGS, TO OPEN BEFORE HIM THE DOUBLE DOORS, SO THAT THE GATES WILL NOT BE SHUT. ISAIAH 45:1

II. ABSOLUTE CONFIDENCE

DANIEL 8:3-4

While at Shushan, Daniel first sees a ram, the war emblem of the Persian Empire, standing by the river. It has two long and powerful horns, but one is longer and stronger than the other. The first horn, represents the

Medes who were first to build an empire, but the second is represented by Cyrus, the Persian, who makes his empire much stronger, far exceeding the Medes. This ram (from the East) is conquering in every other direction, West, North and South, expanding their empire significantly. His armies were so large and powerful that no one could resist them. But eventually, the kings that followed thought they were also invincible by their strength and the massive size of their armies.

NOW ALL THESE THINGS HAPPENED TO THEM AS EXAMPLES, AND THEY WERE WRITTEN FOR OUR ADMONITION, UPON WHOM THE ENDS OF THE AGES HAVE COME. THEREFORE LET HIM WHO THINKS HE STANDS TAKE HEED LEST HE FALL. 1 CORINTHIANS 10:11-12

III. ALEXANDER'S CONQUEST

DANIEL 8:5-7

While Daniel was considering the incredible strength of the Medo-Persian Empire, suddenly he saw a male goat coming toward the ram with amazing speed, "*across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground.*" This male goat only has one "*notable horn*" which is interpreted by Gabriel as the "*first king*" from "*Greece.*" History lets us know that this is Alexander the Great, the brilliant strategist who conquers the world before he turns 33. Alexander was taught in his youth by Aristotle and he becomes so brilliant militarily that when he is opposed by a Persian army of about 500,000 and he only has about 35,000 men, against all odds, he quickly slaughters them, killing over 200,000 with the loss of less than 100 men. It is appropriate that they first meet at a river, because their first battle was at the Granicus River in 334 BC where Alexander delivers his first crushing blow to the Persians. The Greeks are enraged at the Persians because they had previously enjoyed the freedom of democracy before being subjugated by the Persians for many years. This prophecy is so accurate that unbelieving scholars have foolishly claimed Daniel was written after the history!

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Since God has given you your place of leadership, do you use it for Him?
- 2) Are you taking heed, realizing that when you think that you stand the strongest, you may fall?
- 3) Do you thank the Lord for the brilliance and training He has given you, making sure you don't squander it in sin?