

A book that goes along with this Daniel series is *End-Time Secrets of Daniel 8–12*, which can be obtained by:

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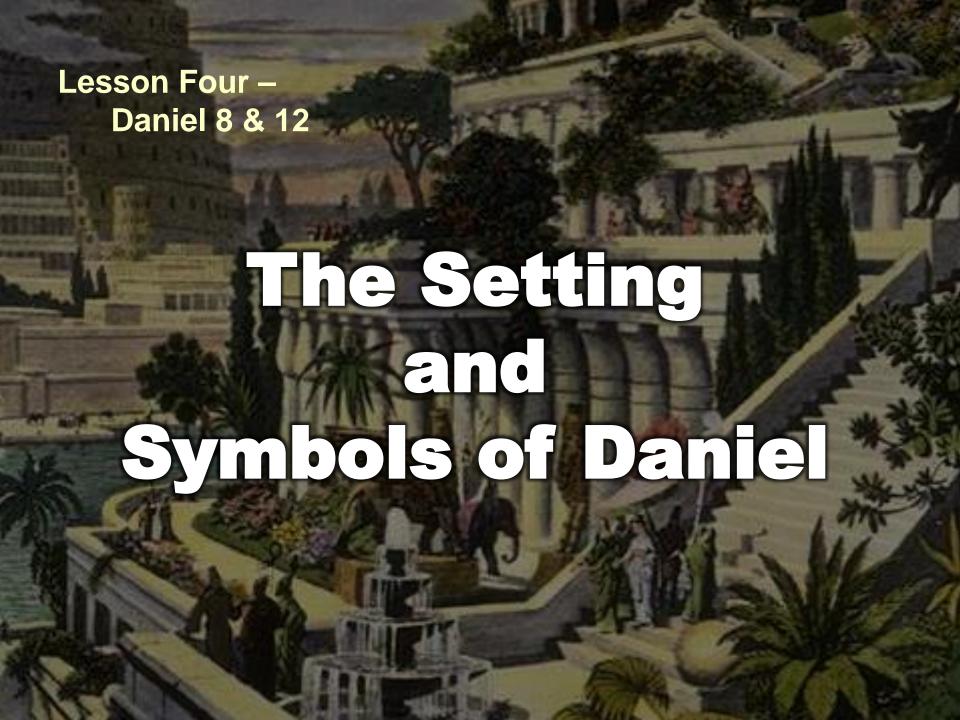
We now continue our studies on:

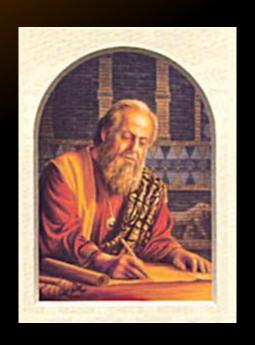
The Story of Daniel 8 and 12

Prophecy Research Initiative presents

The Story of Daniel 8 and 12

Franklin S. Fowler Jr., M.D.





Faithful Daniel began writing the eighth chapter of his book.

Much of what he heard and saw was given in special "prophetic language!" That's what we want to talk about in this study!

"In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, even unto me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first." (Dan. 8:1) Belshazzar was a "trustee king." His father, Nabonidus, the true king of the Babylonian Empire, had gone south to be involved in pagan rituals.

- The vision of Daniel 7 was given in the <u>first</u> year of Belshazzar's reign (~543 B.C.)
- This vision of Daniel 8 was given in the third year of his kingship.

Daniel begins this section of his book by writing in Hebrew (4QDan proves this). That now becomes very special to us. Its Hebrew messages are written directly to God's remnant end-time people.

Verse 1 is a secular timing point as to when it was given to him and when he begins to write. But – the prophecy he is about to hear/see represents a future time, occurring after literal Babylon falls (539 B.C). That's a key point to keep in mind.

One "clock" is secular, the other spiritual.

When Daniel 8 is now given, Belshazzar will have been in power for only three years.

Daniel has been in captivity for 56 years and is now approximately 74 years old.

How many years were the children of Israel to be captive because of their sins?

Twice God had Jeremiah tell the princes of Judah – 70 years:

"And this whole land shall be a <u>desolation</u>, and an astonishment; and these nations shall <u>serve</u> the king of Babylon seventy years." (Jer. 25:11)

"For thus saith the LORD, That <u>after seventy</u> <u>years be accomplished at Babylon I will</u> <u>visit you</u>, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to his place." (Jer. 29:10)

Daniel 8:1 tells us what time it is! The fall of Babylon still lies ahead. When it does fall, there will be 3½ years before the captivity would be ended and God's people delivered.

Verse 1 – Daniel 8:

- 1. 3rd year of Belshazzar's reign
- 2. 549 B.C.
- 3. 56 years into Judah's captivity
- 4. Daniel is 74 years old
- 5. 14 years yet in the 70-year captivity

All this from the simple phrase: "In the third year of Belshazzar's reign."

We must now focus on the last 3½ years left in the captivity, when Babylon does fall.

Though Cyrus militarily took over Babylon, he did not become the king of the empire until 536 B.C.

It was then that he issued the decree for the Jewish people to return and build their temple and the city! (Isa. 44:28)

"Upon his [Darius the Mede's] death, within about two years of the fall of Babylon [537 B.C.], Cyrus ascended to the throne, and the beginning of his reign [536 B.C.] marked the completion of the seventy years." (PK 556)

Prophecy (Isa. 21:9): "Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground."

Prophecy (Jer. 51:8): "Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed."

God uses what is about to occur in the secular world, "Babylon is fallen," as a special prophetic metaphor for the end of time! It will also be important to what Daniel sees shortly.

When Babylon falls in prophecy, God's people are put on alert: (1) preparation must be made to "get out" for (2) deliverance is to be anticipated.

Historically, and at the end of time, this occurs over a $3\frac{1}{2}$ -year period!

Here are a few examples:

Historically:

3½ years from Babylon's fall, God's people were delivered.

3½ years from the onset of Jerusalem's siege in 66 A.D., it fell. God's people were delivered.

End of Time:

The cry goes forward when the abomination of desolation becomes a legal decree, "Babylon is Fallen, come out of her my people."

God's two witnesses will then work for 3½ years – then deliverance comes.

3½ years is again presented in Daniel 12, when the antichrist, king of the north, is persecuting God's people. At <u>his</u> end, God's people are delivered! That prophecy, too, is for the end of time.

God introduces this eschatological period over and over. When we see this 3½ years mentioned – we know that there is somewhere else another 3½ years that attaches to it.

In a prophetic setting, "7" is always a whole. This apocalyptic understanding began with the rebellion against a 7-year Sabbatical cycle. More on that as we move deeper into Daniel's prophecies.

"A vision appeared unto me, even unto me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first." (Dan. 8:1)

Early key observations:

- 1. Daniel is personal in these expressions.
- 2. He is awake through these visions.
- 3. What he sees is described in real and human terms.
- 4. There is dramatic and symbolic imagery in these messages, which Gabriel begins to explain in verse 17.
- 5. Full clarification will not come, however, for many years. Daniel 12 will finish explaining much of what is given in Daniel 8.

Other important issues about Daniel 8:

There is much violence and hostility described!

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"become great" (4, 8-11, 25)

"throw down" (7, 11-12)

"trample" (7, 10, 13)

"might" (8, 24)

"act" (4, 12, 24)
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WHY? This begins the key prophecies of earth's final conflict between good and evil (ending in the book of Revelation)!

- God is very descriptive.
- He reveals painful issues.
- All, however, end in deliverance and hope for those who remain faithful to Him!

Now let's look at a few introductory symbols we will see in chapter 8.

Again: "a vision appeared unto me" (Dan. 8:1)

Symbol One: The word here for "vision" is hazon (chazown).

This is one of two Hebrew words for which "vision" will be used in Daniel 8–12. This is so important! Each word distinguishes a different or unique message between God's people and Satan's.

More about that in another lesson! God is so good. Even the word "vision" will tell us a story.

Then Daniel gives us additional orientation helps:

"And I saw in a vision; and it came to pass, when I saw, that I was at Shushan in the palace, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai." (Dan. 8:2)

From this point on it is most important to understand that every phrase/noun/concept has a symbolic meaning that is apropos to the very end of time!

This will progressively unfold as our study continues.

Symbol Two: Shushan was not in existence at this time! That means there must be something spiritual about this vision! Shushan is a prophetic representation for "deliverance" from the east.

The last great Assyrian king, Ashurbanipal, destroyed Shushan in 629 B.C. (before the Jewish captivity). It wasn't rebuilt until Darius I Hystaspes (522–486 B.C.), also called "Darius the Great," came into power.

From this early Daniel 8 symbol, God invites us to recognize this "city" as a place of deliverance!

What city will be a place of deliverance in the last days? The New Jerusalem.



Palace - Shushan

Someone will soon come out of that city to help God's people. Then they will be called out of Babylon! Daniel sees a palace in that city – thus, it is the center of a kingdom.

Cyrus is going to come out of that city to rescue God's people from Babylon. It is toward the "east," which we will look at shortly. Also, a Ram will soon come from that direction!

Shushan, therefore, is a prophetic symbol for a kingdom in the "east," where "deliverance" comes from to rescue God's people. What arises out of that direction is good news for the saints!

City – "Shushan" – from where salvation comes Government – "Palace" – a kingdom of mercy Deliverance – "East" – direction of hope

- Cyrus made that a reality in Daniel's day, bringing deliverance to God's people.
- It became another reality at the time of Esther (Esth. 9:26), bringing deliverance to God's people!
- At the end of time, out of the "east" will once again arise deliverance for God's people.

So important was this deliverance symbol to the Jewish people that when Jerusalem was finally rebuilt, the "eastern gate" (sometimes called the "Golden Gate" or the "Gate of Susa") of the temple mount faced in the direction of Shushan.



"Golden Gate" on a coin



Gate sealed off

Celebrating the deliverance that came as the result of the intervention of Queen Esther, who was in the Palace of the rebuilt Shushan, the Jews now honor that freedom with the Feast of Purim. This gate was so sacred that they had special "keepers of the gate" to guard and protect it. (I Chron. 31:14, Neh. 3:29) Its last "sacred" use was by Christ:

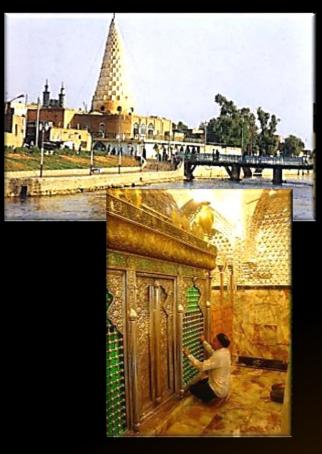
"The second temple was not honored with the cloud of Jehovah's glory, but with the living presence of One in whom dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily,—who was God himself manifest in the flesh. (continued) "The 'Desire of all nations' had indeed come to his temple when the Man of Nazareth taught and healed in the sacred courts. In the presence of Christ, and in this only, did the second temple exceed the first in glory. But Israel had put from her the proffered gift of Heaven. With the humble Teacher who had that day passed out from its golden gate, the glory had forever departed from the temple. Already were the Saviour's words fulfilled, 'Your house is left unto you desolate.' (Matt. 23:38)." (GC 88 24)



Part of Daniel's bones are buried here in the area of Shushan, which is a sacred site to the Muslim world, but only a memory to the Jews.

But there's more to this wonderful story. Let's look deeper into this "eastern" symbol:

Today



Symbol Three: "East"

Just like the seventh day was set aside in the creation week as highly figurative, so also was the direction of "east!"

"And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed." (Gen. 2:8)

We aren't told what "east" means there in Eden, but from elsewhere in Scripture, it appears to be a place where God's special presence arrives from.

On the Day of Atonement the blood was sprinkled to the "east" of the Mercy Seat. (Lev. 16:11-15)



This signified not only cleansing but deliverance.

The ancient tabernacle was entered first through the court, then via its porch, then into the Holy Place from the "east" –

Signifying the direction of deliverance.

The standard of the Tribe of Judah (of a Lion) was placed "on the east side" of the tabernacle "toward the rising of the sun" (Num. 2:3) –

Signifying the direction of newness and deliverance.

Ezekiel gives us this stunning account of God's glory leaving the temple shortly before it was destroyed:

- 1. Coals were scattered over the City (10:2) (purification/judgment Rev. 8:5; cf. Deut. 4:24)
- 2. God's presence went to the "eastern gate" where the wicked leaders are judged (Eze. 10:19–11:12) where He gives His everlasting covenant promise (Eze. 11:16-20)
- 3. Then the glory of God leaves the City and rests on the Mount of Olives "east" of the city. (Eze. 11:23)

Why is this important?

At the end of time the <u>reverse</u> occurs in amazing symbolism.

Ezekiel 40–48 has final imagery of the <u>return</u> of God's glory to the <u>temple</u> – His people. It begins to occur at the beginning of a Jewish sacred year. It is a time when the <u>Passover Lamb's blood</u> starts a special cleansing process.

Just prior to this, His presence comes from the "east" (Rev. 7:2) to finish the sealing work of a select group of people. Then the work of the 144,000 will begin <u>at</u> the onset of the 3½ years, at Passover!

At the end of time something comes out of the "east" where Shushan is, where the palace is.

It is talked about here in Daniel 8!

It is talked about at the end of Ezekiel (chs 40–48)!

It is talked about in Revelation 7, when the angel comes from the "east," crying to "hold the four winds" till God's has completed the work with His people!

"And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God." (Rev. 7:2)

A divine being comes to "measure" the temple in Ezekiel 40–42.

Everything happens through the "eastern" gate.

The City in waiting nearby (Eze. 48:35) means that "the Lord is there," ready to come.

It is <u>no</u> coincidence that in the incredible messages given in Matthew about the end, it says:

"For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." (Matt. 24:27)

Symbol Four: The <u>Ulai River</u>. From Revelation 17:15 we understand that prophetic bodies of water represent people. The context tells us who they are.

These people, the Ulai, that Daniel is next to at

the beginning of his vision are people of the east, associated with deliverance!

What people at the end of time will be associated with deliverance and will call people out of Babylon?



Symbol Five: Rivers – another very important symbol in understanding Daniel 8–12.

The Scriptures are full of references to rivers, water and seas. There are several "rivers," however, that God chose to use as prophetic metaphors.



Hiddekel – Tigris



Euphrates

Ulai - Karkheh

Daniel mentions two of those rivers:

- 1. Hiddekel (known today as the Tigris)
- 2. Ulai

The last river he notes by name is the Hiddekel (Dan. 10:4).

Intriguing is the imagery of Daniel 12, where he sees two individuals on either side of the river (its banks) with Jesus above its waters. He had already been seen between the Ulai banks in 8:16. Most expositors believe that the river in Daniel 12 is also the Ulai.

Ulai — Hiddekel — Ulai

The River story began in the Garden of Eden:

"And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates." (Gen. 2:10-14)

As previously noted: "And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed." (Gen. 2:8)

God chooses to introduce directional messages related to:

The Garden
The River
Where Assyria is

AND – when Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden, they were placed "east" of the Garden (Gen. 3:24) – perhaps in the land of Assyria.

An unnamed river comes into the Garden of Eden; it splits into the "headwaters" of four other rivers.

Each flows into another country, apparently outside of Eden, except the Euphrates.

The weight of evidence suggests that the Euphrates remained as the key river in that Garden. Isn't that interesting:

That was where apostasy began.
Babylon, which is served by the
Euphrates, is where apostasy will end!

"The Garden of Eden remained upon the earth long after man had become an outcast from its pleasant paths. The fallen race were long permitted to gaze upon the home of innocence, their entrance barred only by the watching angels. At the cherubim-guarded gate of Paradise the divine glory was revealed.... When the tide of iniquity overspread the world, and the wickedness of men determined their destruction by a flood of waters, the hand that had planted Eden withdrew it from the earth. But in the final restitution, when there shall be 'a new heaven and a new earth,' it is to be restored more gloriously adorned than at the beginning." (AH 539)

That is when we all passionately hope to see and drink from another river:

The River of Life!



TWO OF THOSE EDENIC RIVERS WERE CHOSEN TO HAVE PROPHETIC SIGNIFICANCE:

The Euphrates – supplied water to the city of Babylon. It represents apostate people. In the end, we will be calling people out of Babylon.

The Hiddekel – represented water flowing through the desert. It is to the "east" of the apostate people, where *deliverance* is found. From the waste places of the arid earth come the people responding to the deliverance message!

In Daniel, this third prophetic river is added:

The Ulai River

Again, this was associated with the City of Deliverance. It represents a small body of people associated with the symbol of Shushan.

If we look at the two rivers to the east of Babylon, where Daniel was, and see them as God's people; if we see the Euphrates as the people supporting Babylon, all in an end-time setting; we can decipher two groups of saints, symbolized as God's end-time people!

Revelation 7 talks of two groups: 144,000, the smaller one, and a multitude too great to number!

Soon we will study a ram in Daniel 8. It has two horns. In Revelation 11 we see two witnesses. God is telling us something very special!

The Tigris represents the great multitude.

The Ulai represents the 144,000.

This is not "way out" information! This whole issue will unfold as dramatic evidence in God's prophetic library, defining who the actors are in the final drama of earth's history.

Most interestingly – when the Ulai River is noted (twice in Daniel), it is always associated with <u>Jesus</u> being personally <u>above</u> that river!

He speaks <u>above</u> the Ulai and always presents a <u>timing prophecy</u> for the end of time! Is that coincidence?

Each of those prophetic timing messages specifically state that it is for the "time of the end" (es qes).

These are the two key timing periods that Jesus gave, hovering above the Ulai River:

Daniel 8:14 – 2300 years – this declaration comes from Jesus' voice "between the banks of the Ulai River." (vs 16) This is for the "time of the end." (vs 17)

Daniel 12:7-12 — three time periods come from Jesus, who is <u>above the waters</u> of the Ulai River. (vs 6) He said that they were for the "time of the end." (vs 12)

If these conclusions are correct, and the weight of evidence suggests that they are, then these timing prophecies have utmost importance to the:

<u>Daniel 8:14</u> – 2300 years – this declaration comes from Jesus' voice "between the banks of the Ulai River." (vs 16) This is for the "time of the end." (vs 17)

<u>Daniel 12:7-12</u> – three time periods come from Jesus, who is <u>above the waters</u> of the Ulai River. (vs 6) He said that they were for the "time of the end." (vs 12)



"The light that Daniel received from God was given especially for these last days. The visions he saw by the banks of the Ulai and the Hiddekel, the great rivers of Shinar, are now in process of fulfillment, and all the events foretold will soon come to pass." (TM 112-113, 1890)

It was at this time that Expositor White felt she was in the "last days."

From 1887 on she gradually began to share messages that looked more and more into the future.

There's another "easterly" issue that we must address before going on in Daniel – in fact, an issue that will become very important to him and to God's people!

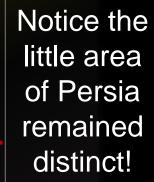
Ashurbanipal (668–627 B.C.) was the last great king of Assyria. He was the one who destroyed the city of Shushan in 629 B.C.

As the Assyrian power quickly waned, Media joined with the Babylonians (plus others) to attack Nineveh in 612 B.C. Assyrian power came to its final end!

What happened next is fascinating:

The Medes had been pushing into other lands, beginning to create one of the great ancient empires (beginning

in 625 B.C.).



At the same time, west of Persia were the Babylonians with centralized power in their capital city. They were being increasingly irritated at the rebellious spirit of the Jewish people in Palestine, especially with King Jehoiakim, whom Babylon controlled.



Babylon finally attacked. Over three successive military campaigns, Jerusalem was laid to the ground, just as Shushan had been previously.

Thus – in Daniel's chapter 8 vision – neither city was in existence.

They both had "fallen!"

Adding to this now is a timing message regarding this prophecy:

Note how this unfolds!

The prophecy in Daniel 8 mentions Medo-Persia and Greece as part of its great symbols.

- Babylon is <u>not</u> mentioned (only in that Daniel shares where the prophecy was given)!
- This means that this vision begins after "Babylon has fallen."

The chapter 8 vision begins with an "eastern" focus in Shushan. Why? The prophecy relates to after the fall of Babylon, looking eastward toward Medo-Persia! But – the final intent of the message will become symbolically spiritual.

Symbol Six: Cyrus and his Babylonian campaign



Cyrus the Great was mainly a military leader. He came to his Babylonian power in 539 B.C., at which time Daniel had been in Babylon for approximately 66 years.

MESOPOTAMIA

Babylonia

Previously, Cyrus had successfully attacked city after city for 19 years, including some in the

Median Empire. Though Persia remained "distinct," the Medes held lordship over Cyrus until 540 B.C., when he attacked the city of Opis, defeating its king, Nabonidus.

Nabonidus, the true king of Babylon, had gone to the city of Tayma (Tema) 14 years before to worship the moon god, Sin. As we have seen, he left his son, Belshazzar, in charge of the Empire.

Daniel says that he was given the Daniel 8 vision in the third year of Belshazzar's reign, 10 years before the fall.

Daniel had Jeremiah's writings with him in Babylon (9:1). We aren't told if he was aware of that prophecy regarding the fall of that city – but he was a unique Bible student, and it is a reasonable assumption!

Nabonidus worshiping the moon



Jeremiah (25:9) had prophesied the Babylonian captivity.

Then God directed Jeremiah to prophesy that Babylon would eventually fall.

"For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken: their arrows shall be as of a mighty expert man; none shall return in vain." (Jer. 50:9)



This is the Cyrus Cylinder that is displayed in the British Museum.

It was written by or for Cyrus after he conquered Babylon, describing its fall. The details of that conquest are spelled out in Akkadian cuneiform script.



Can you imagine that this document was written by Cyrus around 536 B.C., fulfilling the prophecy of Jeremiah and Daniel?

3½ years before the end of the 70 years of captivity – Babylon fell.

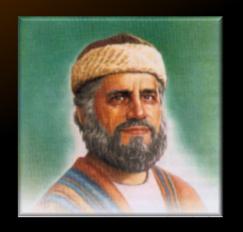
It fell by a "king" coming from the east to defeat apostasy and bring deliverance to God's people out of Babylon.





Then – at the end of the 3½ years, God's people were on their way to Canaan!





Approximately 150 years before, God had called the prophet Isaiah. He had witnessed the fall of the northern tribes. His book is

filled with counsel and help for the kings of Judah. Isaiah is also a book of end-time prophecy.

Many of his amazing prophetic themes present "deliverance" messages!

Suffering Savior – First Advent (Isa. 53)

"But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed." (vs 5)

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." (vs 6)

"He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth." (vs 7)

Second Advent

"Behold, the Lord God shall come with a strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him. Behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. He will feed the flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those who are with young."

(Isa. 40:10-11)

Justice and Kindness will Mark His Kingdom Reign

"A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench; he will bring forth justice for truth. He will not fail nor be discouraged, till He has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands shall wait for His law.... To open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the prison." (Isa. 42:3-4, 7)

New Earth Future Kingdom

"A new heaven and new earth" (Isa. 65:17, 66:22)

Jesus will come again to bring us deliverance. Then we will meet Him in the air and be on our way to "Canaan."

Finally – a new "Canaan" will be made – a new heaven and a new earth. It will be our eternal home!

In Isaiah is another prophecy – very apropos to our study of Daniel and the end of time!

He predicted that Cyrus would arise and become a deliverer to God's people. In fact, that prophecy is so powerful that Cyrus is mentioned by name over a century before his birth.

Cyrus functioned as a savior to God's people.

There is prophetic language in Isaiah that
is remarkably similar!

Watch what happens!

We're going to study about a conquering ram, which represents Medo-Persia. That is what Cyrus came from the east to represent!

God, through Isaiah, even describes him in Messianic terms!

Cyrus:

He is my shepherd (lsa. 44:28)

God's anointed (Isa. 45:1)

Came from the east (Isa. 46:11)

Sets captives free (Isa. 45:13)

Called righteous (Isa. 45:13)

Jesus:

Good shepherd (John 10:11, Heb. 13:20)

He was anointed (Matt. 3:16)

Comes from east (Matt. 24:27)

Delivers captives (Luke 4:16)

Called righteous (I John 2:1)

Here are some amazing questions:

If Cyrus has such deep spiritual prophetic meaning, then Medo-Persia must also – right?

If Medo-Persia is a spiritual metaphor, we need to understand, then, its companion animal, the ram, also!

Since they are said to be for the "time of the end," we have a contemporary prophecy to unravel!

What have we learned and covered?

- 1. Daniel 8 is given ten years before Babylon falls.
- 2. The vision, however, applies after Babylon falls.
- 3. It occurs in the City of Shushan, which also has fallen. Thus, a great spiritual metaphor is occurring.
- 4. The imagery will begin with Medo-Persia and Cyrus from the east all symbols of "deliverance."
- 5. Isaiah had prophesied of Cyrus as a savior.
- 6. Since Daniel 8–12 are for the "end of time," all these historical symbols represent prophecy for the very end of time!

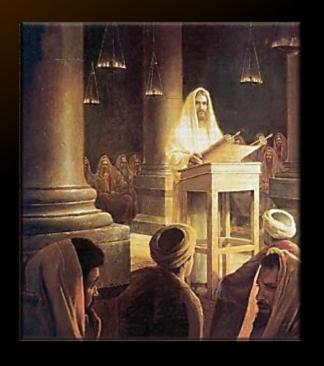
The "ram," the "he-goat" and the "little horn" are all related to the time God's people will be delivered at the very end.

We must not see these as "too deep to understand." When the symbols are seen and the timing understood, the beauty of prophecy begins to unfold.



"The Bible student must empty himself of every prejudice, lay his own ideas at the door of investigation, and with humble, subdued heart,

with self hid in Christ, with earnest prayer, he should seek wisdom from God. He should seek to know the revealed will of God because it concerns his present and eternal welfare. This word is the directory by which he must learn the way to eternal life." (CT 463)



"This day the prophecy is fulfilled in your ears." Today, Daniel 8 is for you. It will soon become part of the Loud Cry. Study, become acquainted, open your hearts. God wants you to help finish the work.

The End

Next Lesson:

The Ram of God and that Terrible Goat



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