

Spiritual Growth Questions for May 21, 2023

Opener: What kind of history student were or are you? Do you enjoy learning about past events and long-ago? Why? If you could take a week to visit any culture or any period of human history, what era would it be? Why?

- I. **Read Daniel 8:1-11.** In Daniel's vision, which details strike you as the most vivid and powerful? What two animals did Daniel see and what did they do? How did Daniel describe the little horn and what it did? What do you think the term "the glorious land" refers to? (See Ezekiel 20:5-6)
- II. **Read Daniel 8:12-14.** What would the little horn do with the truth? Why does this matter? What discussion does Daniel hear in vs.13-14, and why is it important?
- III. An emphasis of this chapter is that God knows the future. What effects should this truth have on your daily life? Why do you think it was necessary and helpful for God to reveal the coming kingdoms to the people of Israel?
- IV. **Read Daniel 8:15-18.** Who helped Daniel understand the meaning of the vision? Review Daniel 8:15-18 and try to put yourself in Daniel's situation. As you reflect on the elements of the vision he was shown, to what degree can you relate to how Daniel responded? Can you identify with his reactions? What particular sensitivity to the things of the Lord is Daniel reflecting here, and how does it compare to your own sensitivity to things?
- V. **Read Daniel 8:19-27.** What does Daniel learn in these verses? How does Gabriel describe the vision? What particular instruction does he give Daniel and why? Summarize Daniel's response in verse 27? Have you ever been overpowered or overwhelmed by the truths of Scripture, as Daniel was in this text? What were you reading, and why was it so powerful?
- VI. We sometimes have a tendency to think things are particularly bad for the church and for God's truth in our own time and place. How does this chapter challenge that idea? How does this chapter cause you to worship Jesus more, and more gratefully?

Deeper Study: What connections do you see between the representation of evil in Daniel 8 and the instructions that Christians are given in 1Peter 5:8-9?

Living for God in a Broken World: A Study of Daniel Serving the God Who Delivers Daniel 8 May 21, 2023, Pastor John Lloyd

How do we live for God in ungodly times-like our own? Is it worth standing firm and obeying God when His kingdom seems so far away? How can we live courageously and confidently in nations that do not seek to live under God's rule? How is it possible to be a blessing to our nations and show the power and goodness of our God, even in a time such as ours? This is the context that Daniel found himself in. This story will exalt God as king and His kingdom in ways that will ultimately find their fulfillment in Jesus. Daniel shares a vision that there will be a time of tribulation. It will definitely seem like God's people are losing. He shares that there will also be an announced time of deliverance. It's knowing that this time is coming that helps God's people face difficult times. I do not have to understand everything that is happening to be able to persevere. I know the God who holds the future.

Big Idea: Knowing God will deliver in the future helps me/us face difficulties in the present. **I can trust God who holds the future with my present.**

8:1-14 The vision of the ram and the goat 8:15-27 Interpretation of that vision

- I. _____ throughout history and your history.

Daniel 8:1 In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me, Daniel, after that which appeared to me at the first. 2 And I saw in the vision; and when I saw, I was in Susa the citadel, which is in the province of Elam. And I saw in the vision, and I was at the Ulai canal. 3 I raised my eyes and saw, and behold, a ram standing on the bank of the canal. It had two horns, and both horns were high, but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last. 4 I saw the ram charging westward and northward and southward. No beast could stand before him, and there was no one who could rescue from his power. He did as he pleased and became great.

548-547 BC Ulai Canal/ outside of Babylon/ near the center of future power.

8:3 Ram represents the Medo-Persian empire. The longer of his two horns reflects the predominant position of Persia. 539-330BC.

Daniel 8:5 As I was considering, behold, a male goat came from the west across the face of the whole earth, without touching the ground. And the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes. 6 He came to the ram with

the two horns, which I had seen standing on the bank of the canal, and he ran at him in his powerful wrath. 7 I saw him come close to the ram, and he was enraged against him and struck the ram and broke his two horns. And the ram had no power to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled on him. And there was no one who could rescue the ram from his power. 8 Then the goat became exceedingly great, but when he was strong, the great horn was broken, and instead of it there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven. (Daniel 8:19-20)

2 Peter 1:19 We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

History is God's story! History is His-Story! God controls the future!

II. _____ yourself for earthly powers _____ to be greater than God.

Daniel 8:9 Out of one of them came a little horn, which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the glorious land. 10 It grew great, even to the host of heaven. And some of the host and some of the stars it threw down to the ground and trampled on them. 11 It became great, even as great as the Prince of the host. And the regular burnt offering was taken away from him, and the place of his sanctuary was overthrown.

The focus, however, is on the violence of the small horn, which is directed against God and his hosts. The small horn attacks the formal worship of God's people, and thus this violence is a new level of horror that cannot go unanswered. A cosmic war stands behind human conflict. E. Carpenter

I Peter 4:1 Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin.

Daniel 8:12 And a host will be given over to it together with the regular burnt offering because of transgression, and it will throw truth to the ground, and it will act and prosper.

Psalms 51:6 Behold you delight in truth in the inward being.
John 4:24 Worship in spirit and truth John 8:32 You will know the truth...
John 14:6 I am the way and the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me.

John 16:13 When the spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth.

Daniel 8:24 His power shall be great—but not by his own power; and he shall cause fearful destruction and shall succeed in what he does, and destroy mighty men and the people who are the saints. 25 By his cunning he shall make deceit prosper under his hand, and in his own mind he shall become great. Without warning he shall destroy many. And he shall even rise up against the Prince of princes,

Being forewarned is being forearmed! God is preparing me for what lies ahead! I can trust God who holds the future with my present.

III. _____ who delivers even when I don't _____ my present.

Daniel 8:13 Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to the one who spoke, "For how long is the vision concerning the regular burnt offering, the transgression that makes desolate, and the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled underfoot?" 14 And he said to me, "For 2,300 evenings and mornings. Then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state." (**Evil/trials have an end date!**)

Psalms 6:3 My soul is in anguish. *How long*, O Lord, how long? Psalm 13:1 *How long*, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? 2 *How long* must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart? *How long* will my enemy triumph over me? Psalm 35:17- O Lord, *how long* will you look on? Rescue my life from their ravages, my precious life from these lions. I Peter 5:9 Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the...

Daniel 8:25b And he shall even rise up against the Prince of princes, **and he shall be broken**—but by no human hand. 26 The vision of the evenings and the mornings that has been told is true, but seal up the vision, for it refers to many days from now."

Daniel 8:27 And I, Daniel, was overcome and lay sick for some days. Then I rose and went about the king's business, but I was appalled by the vision and did not understand it.

I Peter 5:10 And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. 11 To him be the dominion forever and ever.

"The final word is not had by the ram, or the goat, but by the Lamb." How does this comfort you today?

I can trust God who holds the future with my present! God is in control!