

Daniel



Lesson 16-The Struggle for Truth

Focus: Daniel 8:1-27

- ❖ In the “third year of King Belshazzar” (around 551 BC), just several years before the fall of Babylon to the Persians in 539 B.C., Daniel saw a vision that revealed a struggle between truth and deception; *A battle between our Prince Jesus Christ and the enemy of all righteousness. This war would be waged for many, many, years but in the end, Jesus and His truth would be victorious. Hold on tight as the Bible reveals this “neck and neck” struggle for the Truth!!*
- ❖ What is the first Beast that Daniel sees in this vision? _____ (v.1-4) What does the Bible say this two horned Ram represents? _____ (v.20) The kingdoms of Media and Persia expanded westward, southward, and northward as they conquered Babylon, Lidia, and Egypt. In doing so, they took possession of the Holy Land—Jerusalem.
- ❖ What Beast did Daniel see running to destroy this two horned Ram? (v.5-8) _____ What nation does the Bible say was represented by the male Goat? (v.21,22) _____ Alexander the Great’s Kingdom of Greece moved so quickly that it hardly even “touched the ground”. Greece expanded from the western part of Europe towards the East. It quickly conquered the Medo-Persian Empire and took possession of Jerusalem. When Alexander died shortly after his successful conquest, his four generals; Lysimachus, Cassandar, Ptolemy, and Seleucus divided up his Greek Empire into four distinct parts—each towards one direction of the compass.
- ❖ What Empire did we learn would come immediately after the Greek Empire? _____ What symbolic power does the Bible say comes up next? _____ (v.9) “Another horn.” Some Bible’s also call this power a “little horn” that grows to be great. It moves from one of the four winds of heaven (compass directions) to the south, to the east, and toward the Beautiful land—Jerusalem. History shows us that Rome expanded from just being a tiny little nation out in the west of Europe to being a great Empire. It covered Egypt (in the South), Seleucid territory (in the East), and the holy land of Jerusalem.
- ❖ What would this power do? (v.23-25) _____ He would become incredibly strong. He would persecute God’s people, and even stand up against the **Prince of Princes!** Who is this “Prince of princes”? _____ (Isaiah 9:6 says he is the “Prince of peace” because there is none like him to give us peace. We cannot find real “Peace” without Him. Acts 3:15 calls him the “Prince of Life” because only He can give us Eternal life. Acts 5:31 calls Him the “Prince and Savior” because only Jesus can save us from the power of our sins). Isaiah 9:6 says “the government would be upon his shoulders”. **Did Rome try to kill Jesus when He was a baby? (ref. Matthew 2:13,16) Did they put Him on the cross? _____ Who else is responsible for putting Jesus on the cross? _____ (the Pharisees for one. Didn’t our sins also put Jesus on the cross? _____)**

- ❖ **How do verses 10-12 describe the work of this little horn power? And, can you see how this prophecy is describing the work of Rome in both of its phases—both Pagan Rome, and Papal Rome?**
 - **Rome persecuted God's people (v.10).** *The "starry host" refers to God's people. God told Abraham his descendants would be like the stars of heaven in multitude (Genesis 15:5). Pagan Rome persecuted God's people before Christ came, and especially afterwards. Christians were burned at the stake and fed to lions in the Roman Coliseum. Emperors Nero and Diocletian especially persecuted the church. As Papal Rome took power they continued persecution of Christians who did not agree with their teaching.*
 - **Rome set itself up against Jesus—the "Prince of the host" (v.11).** *Pagan Rome tried to kill Jesus as a baby and also destroyed the Sanctuary in Jerusalem in AD 70. But, Papal Rome set themselves up against Jesus by calling the Pope the "vicar of Christ"—essentially they put the Pope and the priests **in the place** of Jesus Christ. Instead of sending people to Jesus to confess their sins, they sent people to the earthly priests to confess their sins. They turned people away from Jesus as our mediator in the Heavenly Sanctuary (**See 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 4:14-16; 1 John 1:9; 1 John 2:1, 2**). The phrase "daily sacrifice" should read "daily" which refers to Christ's continual work in the Heavenly Sanctuary. The original word is "ha tawmeed" which means "daily" or "continual". The word "sacrifice" was mistakenly added by translators who misunderstood the intent of the passage of scripture.*
 - **Rome "prospered" and "cast the truth down to the ground" (v.12).** *Pagan Rome prospered for a little while, but then began to crumble by the 4th and 5th Centuries A.D. Around the 4th Century A.D. the Roman Emperor Constantine began to favor the Christian faith. But, he believed in both Paganism and Christianity. At this time he united many Pagan ideas with the growing Christian church of the time. He made Christianity popular, but the Truth was compromised and cast down to the ground—corruption was spreading in the church. About the time the Empire's capital moved to Constantinople, the Bishop of Rome was given state power. The Church of Rome carried on its pagan practices while continuing to cast down the truth of God's word. They prospered very much, becoming very wealthy and influential.*
- ❖ **How long would the truth be cast down? Would God ever fully restore His truth? (v.13, 14)___** After 2300 "evenings and mornings" (days) (literal years) something very significant would take place! **Did Daniel understand this part of the vision? (v.26, 27)_____** . *The angel Gabriel had been commissioned to help Daniel understand this vision (v.15-19). Daniel understood about the nations, but not so well about the 2300 evenings and mornings. (In our next two lessons we'll learn more about this).*

Question (s) for the Heart:

Are you glad that Jesus restores all of His truth? _____ Do you want to obey all of God's truth, even if it's different from people's popular ideas? _____