

(Questions for Small Groups & Individuals - from Pastor Mark's sermon on 7-25-10)

Daniel Chapter 8

“Vision: The Ram (Medo-Persia) & Male Goat (Greece)”

[Many of the questions have no right or wrong answer but are meant to promote discussion (or individual contemplation) about the scriptural principles involved. If you have difficult questions (that cannot be resolved in your small group), please feel free to contact Pastor Mark.]

READ Daniel 8:1-2 & 15-19

Question #1: In the first part of chapter 8, we are given Daniel's vision of a ram and a goat. In the second half of chapter 8, we are given the interpretation of the vision. Pastor Mark explained that prophecy can help us gain a broader perspective on life. He had us close one eye, then hold two fingers in front of our other, opened eye. He had us slowly move our fingers further and further away until we could see more clearly. How does prophecy do the same thing in helping us step back and get a different, broader perspective?

READ Daniel 8:3-8 & 20-22

Question #2: In verses 3-8, we are given the vision of a ram and a goat. Pastor Mark said that verses 20-22 give us the interpretation. He said, “The ram is symbolic of the Medo-Persian Empire. The one larger horn is the Persian Empire and refers to Cyrus, king of the Persian Empire. The Goat represents the Greek Empire.” He said that God used Cyrus to return the Jews to their homeland. He said that God will often use unbelievers (like Cyrus) for God's purposes. He then went on to explain, “The broken horn symbolizes the death of Alexander the Great. The four horns coming up represent the four generals that took over for Alexander the Great.” Alexander rose quickly to incredible power but God predicted his fall would come even more quickly. As you consider these things, how can it give you hope as you witness political events in our present day?

READ Daniel 8:9-14 and 23-27

Question #3: Pastor Mark said, “The small horn in verse 9 is related to the little horn of Daniel 7:8” (a reference to the Antichrist). He said, “There is a two-fold fulfillment as there is with many prophecies in the Bible. The initial fulfillment is with Antiochus Epiphanies. The final fulfillment will be with the Antichrist.” Pastor Mark said that Antiochus Epiphanies was a “type” of Antichrist who brought a time of persecution to the Jews. What do you see in our world today that is ‘setting the stage’ for the Antichrist?

Question #4: Pastor Mark gave us a list of scriptural references that are “Allusions to the Antichrist”. There were 33 references in the Old Testament and 13 references in the New Testament. God is clearly sounding a huge warning throughout scripture of the coming Antichrist. He is doing this so that we might be prepared. What would you suggest are ways to be prepared? When should we start preparing and why?