

Sermon to the Saints which are at Topeka, Kansas -- Sunday, May 24, 2020

The Jews are in active conflict with Antichrist – who is energized by His Majesty the Devil – for 2,300 days. That’s six years and 110 days. That’s just under six years and four months. Those days are ended when Christ completes His work at Armageddon and goes in to the new temple to begin His earthly reign of a thousand years.

“Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.” (Daniel 8:13-14)

We have been examining the activities with the Jewish race – the children of Israel – during the period of the Day of the Lord. We’ve been at that process for almost two years now. What is prepared for the Jewish race is a significant component of this Revelation period, so the better we understand the many things written of them during that coming period, the better prepared we will be to either do the Church’s work (if we are blessed in providence to be part of it) or to help prepare the body of the Bride of Christ that does face it. And, while there are a good many instructive items we can cull from the vision granted Daniel in the eighth chapter, this piece of information may be the most compelling and helpful in the larger discussion. For me, anyway.

I’ve been told many times that it is valuable, when I dig into one of these visions, to provide a focus for everyone at the front end of my presentation. This examination is going to take more than one sermon to complete, which makes it even more important that you have a clear endpoint on which to focus your mental attention. So, while we look at the many interesting nuances to be found in the vision of Daniel chapter eight, I ask that you all remember this important piece of eschatological information: *Jews will be in open conflict with Antichrist for 2,300 days.*

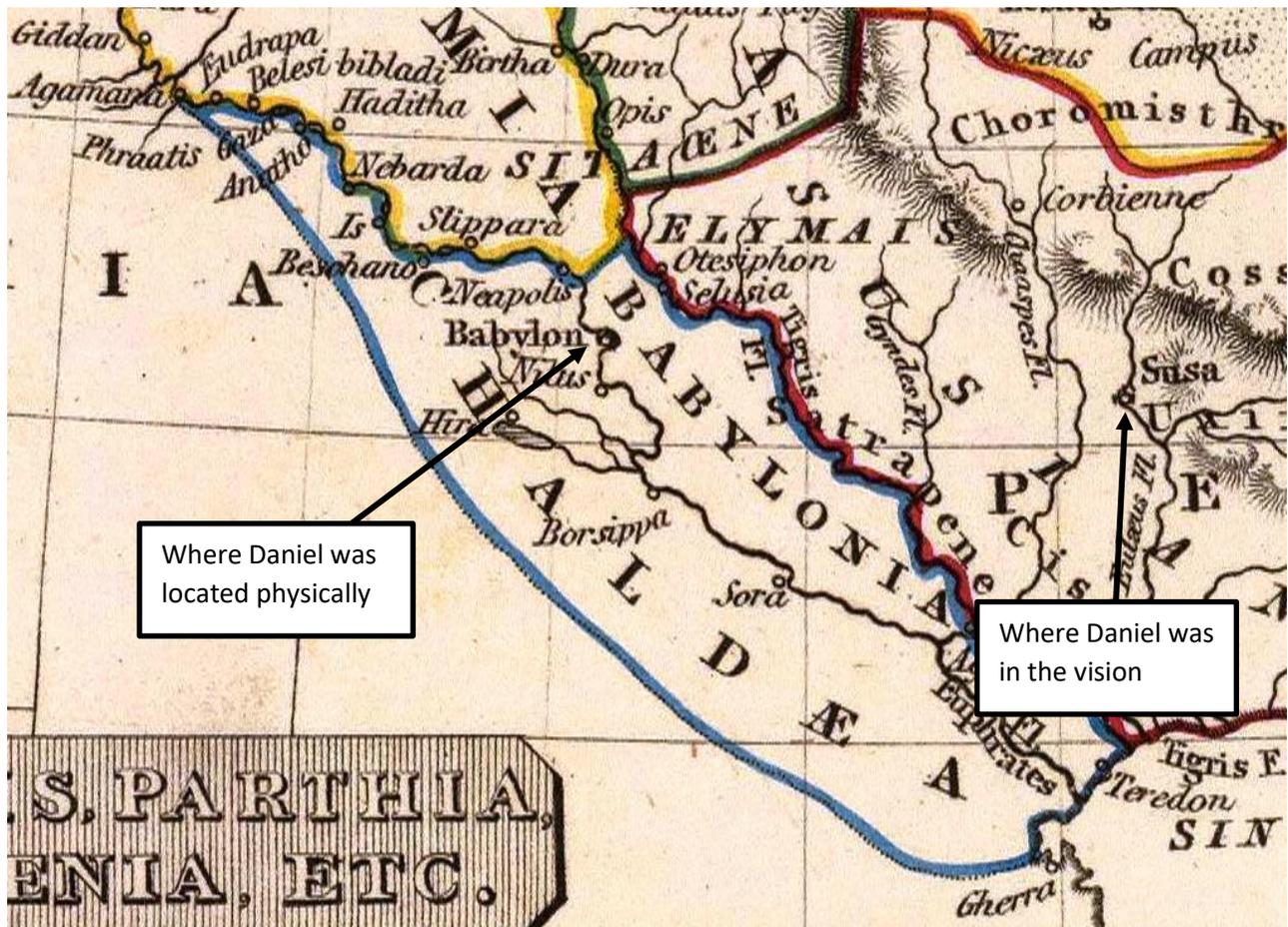
To start the vision, let’s begin with setting the stage. Daniel saw himself in the capital of the Persians fourteen years before Babylon fell ...

“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. 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 [oo-lah’-ee].” (Daniel 8:1-2)

Distinct from the vision of Daniel chapter seven, this vision does not begin with the Babylonian empire. Remember please that in the seventh chapter the *first* beast, that ***“was like a lion, and had eagle’s wings” (Daniel 7:4)***, indicating the majesty of the Babylonian empire under Nebuchadnezzar, began the vision of kingdoms for Daniel. As I indicated in my sermons on that

vision, the Babylonian empire’s “wings [] were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made to stand upon the feet as a man, and a man’s heart was given to it”, intimating how the voracious and majestic kingdom faltered under subsequent kings and waxed weak and childish under Belshazzar. In chapter eight, that impudent and immature king is three years into his reign and all of the indicators of his arrogance and pride are setting in. The fierceness of Babylon’s world dominance had waned, and it seemed to have been replaced with unnecessary self-indulgence, arrogance, and oppression. It was appointed, of course ... so there’s no sense in obsessing over the nuances, but it is instructive to see that Daniel’s vision in chapter eight has no mention of Babylon at all, except that Belshazzar still reigns as king over the Jews.

Belshazzar reigned for seventeen years ... but in his third year Daniel found *himself* as though he sat in the king’s summer estate at Shushan the palace; under the *Persian* empire. The map below shows the distinction between where Daniel physically lived (Babylon’s capital) and where he was in his vision in chapter eight (Persian capital).



The location of *Susa* or Shushan tells us a little more about the timeline of the vision. When Cyrus, the Persian prince *first* conquered Babylon, it was somewhat shortly after Persia had joined with the

nation of the Medes. At that time, through a diplomatic arrangement, the two countries had made a common cause, though not always peaceful. When that was the state of things, the capital of the kingdom was actually *Ecbatana* (north and east of Shushan) under the Achaemenid Empire. That empire was ruled some years by his uncle Darius and was considered the largest single empire that had existed in the earth. When the Persians then fully conquered the Medians and made it a Persian empire, the seat of power shifted to Shushan. This tells us that Daniel's vision is not placed early in the coming kingdom's reign, but rather after it became a Persian dominion and was growing toward its own overthrow by the Grecian Empire.

We saw the indicators of this Persian dominance in the vision of chapter seven, where the bear that represents this empire ***"raised up itself on one side"*** (Daniel 7:5) – expressing that one part of the beast (kingdom) raises higher than the other. In this vision we're presently examining, the Persian dominance is shown by describing ***"a ram which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last"*** (v. 3). Daniel is seeing his vision of ***"the kings of Media and Persia"*** (Daniel 8:20) during that latter period.

In addition to understanding this language to reflect how *certain* was the change in world empires to occur, we also can likely understand that Daniel knew he was going to be put into a position of authority in that new kingdom, as *he* is not just cast off or killed like most those who were in the Babylonian palace as Dr. Gill recites in expounding the passage on Belshazzar's slaying: *"Gadates and Gobryas, who led Cyrus's army up the river Euphrates into the city of Babylon, its course being turned; the inhabitants of which being revelling and rioting, and the gates open, these men went up to the king's palace; the doors of which being opened by the king's orders to know what was the matter, they rushed in, and finding him standing up with his sword drawn in his own defence, they fell upon him, and slew him, and all about him, as Xenophon {c } relates"*.

So, the vision places the reader within the Persian empire that is described as a ram that has assumed great world dominance, ***"pushing westward [Asia Minor and eastern Europe], and northward [toward Turkey, India & Pakistan], and southward [toward Egypt and Ethiopia]"*** (v. 4). Two references in this vision tie it directly to that we've just examined in chapter seven. First, by Daniel intimating that this vision was ***"after that which appeared unto me at the first [of Belshazzar's reign]"*** (v. 1). Second, in that in this vision the kingdoms he discusses continue to be called ***"beasts"*** (v. 4), and he continues his analysis of ***"a little horn"*** (v. 9). It is a good point, then, that we are seeing a continuity of subject matter as we go from chapter seven and into the vision of chapter eight. Time separated the two events, but the visions are continuing to provide Daniel with an understanding of what is to come for his people, the Jews.

So, Daniel is seeing himself well past the end of the current king and kingdom, peacefully taking in the view of future kingdoms and their dominant kings like so much water running past him as he is positioned ***"by the river of Ulai"*** (Daniel 8:1).

The *historical* accounts – distinct from the eschatological accounts – in this vision end with the fall of Alexander the Great and the breaking up of his kingdom.

“And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven.” (Daniel 8:5-8)

Because it is an integral part of this vision, and a much more elaborate part of the vision of Daniel 10-12, there has to be an introduction to this subject of the Grecian rule. A distinct difference between the two visions is found in how elliptically *this* dream deals with the subject and how – it seems even unnecessarily – the *following* vision (chapters 10-12) goes into detail. What we see here is that Daniel is pondering – ***“as I was considering”*** – the curious display of the Persian dominance over that region of the earth when there is this rush of energy ***“from the west”***. Keep in mind that the Persian empire ruled over parts of eastern Europe and was attempting to push across the Aegean Sea to take the Balkan states, including Greece at the southern tip.

Alexander the Great came onto the scene very much like ***“an he goat [] from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground.”*** At age 16 he began fighting for his father King Philip II in the perpetual conflicts of his homeland Macedonia (north of Greece). At age 20, he became king upon his father’s assassination, and immediately began putting his military prowess into action. First he put down a few uprisings within the Balkan peninsula and then embarked on his Persian conquest. Starting with old Asia Minor, he began his military march across what is today Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and was beginning to penetrate India when he fell sick and died on the campaign trail. Seven to eight years of military campaigns brought him across the whole of the Persian empire; a remarkable feat of military genius for his time. All of which was at God’s prophetic appointment in Daniel’s short declaration in the vision of chapter eight.

“And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king [Alexander the Great]. Now that [king] being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power [i.e., capacity to dominate and conquer].” (Daniel 8:21-22)

When Alexander died, his conquered territory was distributed to four of his military generals who almost immediately began quarrelling and fighting with each other to maintain power over the large territory. This is where the vision of Daniel leaves off *history* and jumps to *eschatology*: **“And out of one of them came forth a little horn”**. (v. 9) Therefore, we must turn our energies to learning what we can from this vision about what that monstrous creature does.

The true weight of this vision is what will happen in eschatology ... particularly for us.

“but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision. ... I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation [i.e., my anger toward rebel Jews]: for at the time appointed the end shall be.” (Daniel 8:17, 19)

A simple layout of the structure of this vision might be helpful for us to track better what happened physically to Daniel in this vision.

- After introducing the vision context, he first sees the two beasts and the activity of the little horn (vv. 1-12)ⁱ.
- He second sees and hears the vision of the two saints talking, giving a time stamp on the activity of the little horn (vv. 13-14)ⁱⁱ.
- He third hears the commandment of God for Gabriel to give him an understanding of the vision (vv. 15-16)ⁱⁱⁱ.
- He fourth receives direct spiritual edification from Gabriel about the intent of the vision (vv. 17-26)^{iv}.
- Finally, from the weight of the things he sees, he faints and is sick for some days in contemplation. (v. 27)^v.

When you examine the portion of the vision where the angel Gabriel is giving his instruction, that angel tells Daniel he will make him know **“what shall be in the last end”** of this indignation that God has toward the rebellious Jews. It is true that during every intervening period of time – historical and eschatological – the Jews have been and will be under the meddling influences of oppositional world powers. It has been true since Assyria destroyed the northern kingdom, making the world to learn the phrase *“the lost tribes of Israel”* to this day. Truly, since Jeroboam pulled those ten tribes away from Solomon’s son (1 Kings chapter 12) there has been no complete and independent Jewish nation. There is presently the cobbled-together nation *called* Israel that is home to about 50% of the Jews now alive in the earth, but *that* can hardly constitute anything near the blessing promised to Abraham or articulated during the splendor of the millennial reign of Christ.

So, as Gabriel is introducing his tutoring of Daniel he is putting the emphasis where the conflict boils and then transitions to the fulfillment of that promise. That portion of the vision that provides

historical framing *contributes* to an understanding of how the vision gets the Jews to that end time (i.e., Babylon to Medo-Persia to Greece, etc.). However, the energy that overtakes Daniel ... and is the subject of the two saints who Daniel hears ... and that causes Daniel to fall ill, are those things contained in the initial vision from verse nine to 12, and then is explained by Gabriel in verses 23-25 that begins with ***“and in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full”***. It is *this* portion that the two saints are discussing when they say ***“how long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?”*** That is because it is in *this* portion of the vision and explanation where we have the battle joined like never before between ***“a little horn”*** and Daniel’s people, the Jews.

It is similar to the way the vision of chapter seven unfolds. While we definitely see the prophecy regarding Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece in the opening of the vision (the first three ***“beasts”***), when Daniel is getting into the dialog with Gabriel about that vision, he says: ***“Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast”*** which is the kingdom from which the ***“little horn”*** rises to do all the horrible things that we closely examined in our work about that vision. In both of these visions, it is the work of this ***“little horn”*** that clearly draws the most intense of Daniel’s focus and discussion, because it is the work of that monster that he was given a clear understanding would do horrible things to the Jews ***“at the time of the end” (Daniel 8:17)***.

Both for this reason, and because we are not occupying this earthly plane during the times of the Babylonians, the Medes, the Persians, or the Grecians but rather are approaching unto the time of the ***“little horn”***, we also have *our* most acute interest in that portion of the vision.

The same Antichrist identified in the vision of chapter seven is the actor who comes to the eschatological stage in chapter eight.

“And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land” (Daniel 8:9)

Beginning on August 18, 2019 I did four successive sermons on the vision of Daniel chapter seven^{vi}. In those sermons I examined all of the details that vision provided in an examination of what Daniel’s vision there called a ***“little horn” (Daniel 7:8)*** that was king over the fourth and most diverse ***beast (Daniel 7:7)***. When I was working at the final portion of that analysis I made the point that while it may seem tedious to grind through so much detail about the vision and how it compares to other clear scripture about Antichrist, it is a *must!* We must understand that it is a doctrinal truth that the little horn of Daniel seven is ... the ... Antichrist! The proofs were culled from the passages of scripture and laid out in order for any student to track – so that we would not have to continually redo that work.

Now we come to the vision of chapter eight, and we see the same structure in Daniel's vision – rising and falling of some kingdoms in what *was* prophecy and is *now* history. We see the same keenly interested players on the dreamscape – Daniel, Gabriel, Christ, kingdoms, and saints. And we know the subject matter is the same – the examination of the end of times as it pertains to Jews. So, when we see the same antagonist identified with the same language – the ***“little horn”*** – there is no responsible argument to be mounted that we are talking about any but the Antichrist.

So, what is the difference between the vision of chapter seven and the vision we now consider? Well, that – my sweet friends – is where we can gain some wonderful details if we'll spend some time closely searching out the aspects of this vision that are unique. We will actually see components of the conflict between Antichrist and the Jews in eschatology that the earlier vision did not provide. And though we have some time before we get there, we'll find many more details and components in Daniel's dream that covers chapters ten through 12. But let us be resolved on the question about who this ***“little horn”*** is, of which it is said that he ***“waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land.”***

The seventh iteration of the Antichrist springs up among human leadership before the time of direct confrontation with the saints begins.

“[there] came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven.” (Daniel 8:9-10)

In all the years that I've been moved in my spirit to search out matters of eschatology, it has been a weight on me that events in human history can sometimes come on very quickly – like how this current worldwide pandemic has swept across and disrupted human affairs within just a few months. Certain of the events in eschatology are clearly of that nature – such as the cataclysmic events under the seals, trumpets, and vials. But when it comes to the rise of Antichrist, I have always had a strong sense that he moves under the surface – as God has prepared in providence – and then he springs forth with an energy similar to the expression Paul identifies:

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;” (2 Thessalonians 2:3)

The image I have held in my mind is one of worldwide spiritual darkness (which we certainly have) allowing a man who is energized by Satan and granted by God the proper combination of a strong and gregarious personality and a deceived mind uniquely capable of unprecedented blasphemy and wickedness. He gains power by a brilliant mix of military and political acumen. He seems unencumbered with all the divisiveness that defines world politics as we presently experience, and

he is made for the moment when the world is so fully disrupted that they need such a man to convince them that all will be well.

There is a distinction that we need to carry in our minds and hearts between when Antichrist is ***“revealed, the son of perdition”*** ... when that same man ***“waxe[s] great, even to the host of heaven”*** (Daniel 8:10), and then when he reaches the point where the Apostle Paul says ***“he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God”*** (2 Thessalonians 2:4), or as Daniel expresses ***“by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down.”*** (Daniel 8:11) My point is that we are not talking about one day there’s the same routine of life and preaching and ministering ... then the next we have a ravenous enemy exploded onto the scene who is at the pinnacle of his strength, influence, and deadly military campaign against the saints. It is a process or condition that begins smaller – like history shows the great kings who have stood as symbols of Antichrist all began small and grew wonderfully.

When I preached late last year about the level of tyranny defining the ***“little horn”*** of the Daniel seven vision, I provided some language about the emerging king who is this Antichrist that we are considering. If you closely examine the description Scripture provides, you can see the development of the king into the monstrous, man-destroying, God-opposing beast that he is appointed to become.

“Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords: Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet: Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: and many people with thee. Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself, thou, and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them. After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land [of the called Jews] that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them.” (Ezekiel 38:3-8)

There are in this passage – and in the passage quoted above from Daniel chapter eight – descriptors that are in line with each other. In the vision we’re considering, the ***“little horn”*** rises up and moves ***“toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land.”*** From the same vision, we know that this little horn springs up from one of the ***“four notable ones”*** (Daniel 8:8) who replaced Alexander the Great. When we examine the vision of chapters ten through 12 of Daniel, we will see more detail about those four kingdoms, focusing upon the one that is here referenced – Syria. It is not the same exact geographic make up of the current Syria, because it encompassed territories further north in addition to what we know as modern Syria. So, we should see that this

little horn comes to power in that general territory and grows into influence that spreads **“toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land [literally ‘Palestine’]”**.

Gog is said to go forth with bands from Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya. So, when we look at those parts of the world, we see that Persia is **“toward the east”** of the Syria location and that Ethiopia and Libya are **“toward the south”** of the Syria location. So the two passages making reference to this emerging political leader, who is also described as marching against the **“mountains of Israel”**, are consistent in their descriptors. It is, therefore, a valid conclusion to draw that before this great enemy of the Jews in eschatology rises to the pinnacle of his power and hostilities with the saints, he emerges and begins showing himself strong in the nations about that region.

Because of the density of this subject, I am going to leave off the analysis for today. The next time I’m able to speak with my friends here, I will take up the subject of this emerging king’s audacious joining with Satan in conflict with the holy angels in an attempt to secure this earth from Christ’s dominion. I hope, Lord willing, to show how that wraps in with the amazing works under the seals. I will also hope to open for you how this vicious king pushes to undo the saints of God in the earth and will make his blasphemous headquarters the very place where God promised Abraham that He would dwell with His people, the Jews for all eternity.

In the meanwhile, please make it your business to consume the visions of Daniel chapters 7-12 so that you will increase in your grasp of the context and benefit more broadly from the past and future sermons about those beautiful visions God granted our friend and fellow servant Daniel. I, of course, stand always ready to commune with any one of you on that and other matters of doctrine and practice.

I love you all. Amen.

ⁱ ¶ 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. 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. Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last. I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great. And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven. And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered. (Daniel 8:1-12)

ii *“Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.”* (Daniel 8:13-14)

iii *“¶ And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man. And I heard a man’s voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision.”* (Daniel 8:15-16)

iv *“So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision. Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: but he touched me, and set me upright. And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be. The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power. And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand. And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days.”* (Daniel 8:17-26)

v *“And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king’s business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it”* (Daniel 8:27)

vi The four sermons are parts eight through 11 of the series on Jews in eschatology spanning through March 22, 2020: <https://tinyurl.com/WBC20190818PDF>, <https://tinyurl.com/WBC20191110PDF>, <https://tinyurl.com/WBC20200105PDF>, and <https://tinyurl.com/WBC20200322PDF>.