

Sermon Notes -- Daniel 8 Suffering and Hope and a New King

Read Daniel 8:1-4 – The Ram (Sheep)

This Ram is a giant, aggressive male sheep. It starts in the west and runs throughout the world, and no one could stop it.

Read Daniel 8:5-8 – The Mountain Goat

This Goat is a giant mountain goat. It's bigger and stronger than the ram. This goat is furious. And it's fast. Its feet don't even touch the ground.

He attacks the ram and destroys it.

This is an image of powerful people tromping all over the world so they can take what they want without any regard to the suffering of the people.

Read Daniel 8:9-12 – Another little horn

The "Beautiful Land" is Daniel's home. It's where he grew up. The stars thrown down and trampled are Daniel's people.

In Daniel's home, everything revolved around the temple. Everything revolved around God. And this beast of a man sets up his own religion in the very temple of God.

Read Daniel 8:13-14 – Holy Ones Ask "How Long?"

God cares about suffering. He's sick about it. But it is a matter of time. And even the Holy Ones want to know, "How long?"

Read Daniel 8:15-26 – Gabriel Explains

Daniel currently serves in the world Babylonian kingdom. It will be replaced by the Medo-Persian kingdom. This is the Ram with two horns pressing across the landscape.

The Greeks led by Alexander the Great come blazing across the world. He is the Mountain Goat with one horn who runs so fast his feet do not touch the ground! He defeats the Persians.

As time passes, a Greek leader named Antiochus Epiphanes comes to power. His name means "Antiochus, god in the flesh." Some call him Antiochus Epimanes, which means "Antiochus, the Madman." Think Hitler. Think Stalin.

He killed thousands of Jews. He stopped all religious ceremonies and replaced them with his own. He put a statue of his god in the temple. And even began to call himself a god and demanded to be worshipped.

This went on for about 3 ½ years until mysteriously Antiochus died. No one killed him. He just died.

What Daniel predicted came true almost 400 years later.

- 1. The Bible predicted the future**
- 2. The reason for suffering is the destruction of evil**
- 3. Suffering is eased by God's people being a blessing**

Read Daniel 8:27 – Serving the King

The knowledge that suffering will continue as God rids the world of evil is hard to take. But after we've taken it in, we need to get up and be about the king's business.

Our king is Jesus Christ. And he says our business is easing the suffering of the afflicted. Be a blessing to those around you. Be very careful not to get caught up in any scheme that makes you think you deserve more than anybody else. That is the spirit of the antichrist.

The spirit of the Christ, of Jesus, is to forgive and love and serve.