

## Chapter 8 - The Ram and the Goat

### Vision of a Ram and a Goat

*8 In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me—to me, Daniel—after the one that appeared to me the first time.*

Chapter 8 follows Chapter 7 as Daniel makes clear. This vision appears “*after the one that appeared to me the first time.*” The reference to “*the first time*” would also indicate that he is having multiple repeats of his visions. We must therefore treat these visions as following the one in Chapter 7. Using the 552BC date we mentioned in the earlier chapter, this vision took place around 549BC or 10 years before the fall of Babylon.

As discussed in Chapter 5, the context is important here because the content of this vision completely ignores the Babylon Daniel is living in. If we remember, King Nabonidus, Belshazzar’s father, is recognised as King of this time but is in self-imposed exile. For Daniel and other courtiers, there would be no guarantee that he would ever return, which is why ancient writers like Daniel have called Belshazzar ‘King’. This exile would have naturally created a power struggle regardless of how strong the relationship between father and son was, such as that between the Georgian monarchs in England. What we have here, in form, is Daniel firmly and publicly putting himself in Belshazzar’s camp.

Either from Daniels perspective or Gods, such a division in the Kingdom looks like the nation is falling and references to Babylon are therefore omitted from this vision. Importantly too, this is about the time that Cyrus the Great became the king of both Media and Persia, forming what is classically called the Medo-Persian empire, often referred to as the Achaemenid Empire today. For clarity, I will follow the classic form of Medo-Persia for the following analysis.

Babylon’s omission is clearly owing to its decline while Medo-Persia is in its ascendancy.

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*2 I saw in the vision, and it so happened while I was looking, that I was in Shushan, the citadel, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision that I was by the River Ulai.*

Daniel was out visiting one of the provinces, in Sushan which is today in Western Iran, East of the Persian Gulf. Daniel is beside a river and states that he was in vision. Where is really immaterial to the overall chapter.

*3 Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and there, standing beside the river, was a ram which had two horns, and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last. 4 I saw the ram pushing westward, northward, and southward, so that no animal could withstand him; nor was there any that could deliver from his hand, but he did according to his will and became great.*

As stated, this is about the time that Cyrus the Great is in his ascendancy, and he is starting to conquer the world. His victory over the Medians is also discussed in Chapter 10, but at this time he is unstoppable. While Babylon is still the most powerful country on the face of the Earth, it is also politically fractured and damaged, while Medo-Persia is quickly growing.

The two horns represent the duality of the Medo-Persian Empire, similar to the Austro-Hungarian in more recent times. The single Monarch ruled both nations but had separate courts and regnal names for each. The smaller horn being the earlier indicates Media rose before Persia, yet Persia had dominance over Media through their history, which is why Persia is much more remembered today.

It is not commonly accepted that Cyrus, specifically, is identified with this Ram, but it is important to consider the timing of this vision.

*5 And as I was considering, suddenly a male goat came from the west, across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. 6 Then he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing beside the river, and ran at him with furious power. 7 And I saw him confronting the ram; he was moved with rage against him, attacked the ram,*

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*and broke his two horns. There was no power in the ram to withstand him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled him; and there was no one that could deliver the ram from his hand.*

The goat from the west can only represent the next nation that arose, Macedonian Greece under Alexander the Great. Greece being physically west of Babylon, Persia and all other nations, and the next in historic dominance, there is no question that it was the next great power. Although a collection of city states, Greece was much more unified than Medo-Persia, having a single culture; Macedonian, to draw its leadership from while Medo-Persia had multiple languages and fighting styles.

It has been discussed, but there is little evidence that Alexander was any less an absolute monarch than Cyrus, and we need to consider these horns as a reference to culture rather than actual monarchs, as discussed in Chapter 7. Political power was split in Medo-Persia while it was centralised in Greece of this time.

This goat is also described as having incredible swiftness, able to move “*across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground*” as well as being ferocious. When he spied the goat, he charged, overcame, and broke him, trampling him into the dust from which no one could deliver.

Alexander's Father, Philip II, was the military leader of the League of Corinth, an organisation of Greek City-States to combat Persian dominance. Philip hosted Persian exiles at court and actively supported opponents to the regime, before preparing an invasion of Greece himself. He was assassinated before he could cross the Bosphorus. When Alexander took the throne, he also took his father's role as the chief opponent of Persia, and he crossed the Hellespont in 334 BC with a great force. In about a year he had conquered the entirety of Persia after fighting 4 great battles. The Persian empire was subjugated, and its people were put under Greek rule.

*8 Therefore the male goat grew very great; but when he became strong, the large horn was broken, and in place of it four notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven.*

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As the story is widely told, within 3 years, Alexander conquered the world and when his army refused to march further into India, he sat and wept for there were no more worlds to conquer. Returning to Babylon, Alexander began a project of organising and building throughout the empire but was cut short by his death in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar II. He died on the night between June 10 and 11, 323 BC, at the age of 32. Tradition holds that he became sick after drinking two large goblets of Babylonian wine, a particularly strong beverage that reputedly only the Gods could imbibe more than one mouthful of. Malaria has also been given as a possible cause of death, complicated by alcoholic liver disease. More recently, poisoning has been proposed as a possible cause too. For this analysis, the cause of his death is not very important.

What is important is the following power struggle, commonly called the Diadochi or 'successor' Wars. Alexander's wife, Roxana, was pregnant at the time of his death but the child, christened Alexander, would be assassinated in 310BC at about 13. A regency would never have been acceptable in Greece and conflict opened very shortly after Alexander the great's death. The subsequent wars had as many as 50 leaders attempting to become supreme but after the crucible of conflict, four states emerged from the four most accomplished generals. Cassander centralised his power in and around Macedon while Lysimachus held the remainder of Greece. Ptolemy took Egypt and adopted its culture while Seleucus took the remaining are of Asia Minor and what once was Persia. Clearly, not only did "*four notable [horns] came up*" in place of "*the large horn [that] was broken*" but they also were pushing "*toward the four winds of heaven.*"

*9 And out of one of them came a little horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Glorious Land.*

This appears a paradox when connected to Chapter 7. In that chapter we find that the 'Little Horn' arose from the head of the 4<sup>th</sup> Beast and had to uproot 3 other horns to make a place for itself. "*7 ...behold, a fourth beast... it had ten horns... and there was another horn, a little one, ... before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots.*" Yet here in Chapter 8, 'Little Horn' grows out of one of the 4 successor horns and presses "*toward the Glorious Land*", being the land of Israel.

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The paradox is explained when we look at a series of religious matters commonly collected together as the 'Babylonian Mysteries' which will be detailed in an essay after this chapter.

What at first appears a paradox is actually a connection between both the spiritual and military powers that the 'Little Horn' exercises. In Chapter 7, these powers are entirely martial, and the powers of the Papacy's military might rose only after the Roman Empire fell. In Chapter 8 the 'Little Horn' is a spiritual power and the roots of that spiritualism started when the Greek philosophies were merged with Babylonian religion. This sets the tone for the rest of the interpretation of this chapter; a spiritual interpretation.

*10 And it grew up to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and some of the stars to the ground, and trampled them. 11 He even exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host; and by him the daily sacrifices were taken away, and the place of His sanctuary was cast down. 12 Because of transgression, an army was given over to the horn to oppose the daily sacrifices; and he cast truth down to the ground. He did all this and prospered.*

The "*host of heaven*", at this time, can only relate itself to Israel and the Israelitish states. This little horn attacks Gods people and "*cast down some*" of both the people and the principles that it holds dear; the "*host*" and "*stars*". We are looking for a power going so far as to supplant the "*Prince of the host*" which can only refer to Christ as no one else is so exalted.

There are 2 interpretations here. Firstly, the philosophies of Babylon passed to the Pergamum Kingdom were somewhat universally accepted by Greece including the Selucid Syrian Empire. When Antiochus IV then insulted Jerusalem in 168 BC, it is right to say that he insulted God. The problem with this interpretation is that it relies on the "*little horn*" coming out of 2 horns, which opposes the text which says the "*little horn*" came "*out of one of them*". As stated above, the Babylonian Mysteries passed to Lysimachan Pergamum, not Seleucid control.

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Furthermore, Antiochus' insult to Jerusalem and the Jewish tradition and religion were, generally, kept to just that, insults. Antiochus is remembered for instructing Israelitish priests to eat pig flesh, sacrifice pigs and sprinkle pigs' blood on altars and in other important places around the Temple. He also restricted practices and persecuted those who stood against his rule in revolt. This was a grave insult to Jews, and his persecutions were brutal, but they were far short of an out-and-out attack. Fundamentally, Syrian and Ptolemaic governors respected the institutions of their captured people and while Antiochus IV certainly replaced the Israel's leaders with his own choices, the temple services and ceremonies were only polluted; not abandoned. In other words, to look to the next verse, under Antiochus IV, it cannot be stated that, by him, were the "*daily sacrifices*" even interrupted, let alone "*taken away*" and "*the place of His sanctuary was*" preserved, not "*cast down.*"

As an alternative, we should consider what we have discussed above about the transfer of the Babylonian Mysteries from Lysimachus to the Kingdom of Pergamon and then onto Rome in 133 BC. After Alexander's empire broke up, the Israelitish kingdom fell under the prevue of the Ptolemies who used the area as a buffer state and tax farm but, generally, left it to its own operations. They respected Jewish institutions and left it to run its own affairs. When Antiochus IV took over and insulted the Jews in the above stated fashion, the Jews revolted and rebelled in a series of small conflicts collectively known as the Maccabean Revolt. The name comes from Judas Maccabeus, one of the main leaders of the revolt and after the 8 books of Maccabees, widely considered historic sources but rejected by Protestant Christians from their inclusion in the Bible. The resulting Hasmonean kingdom was able to increasingly break away from the Seleucid Empire until around 110 BC when it was all but independent.

The turbulent rising of this kingdom meant peace was an impossibility, and civil wars and unrest were a constant part of life. The Pharisees and Sadducees fought for political and civil dominance and violence was ever present. This was in the context of the breakup of the Seleucid Empire which, by 120, was practically a rump state. The Kingdom of Pontus was pushing an expansionist agenda which was brining it into conflict with almost all its neighbours including Rome which had ever increasing holdings in Greece, not least of which was the bequeathed Kingdom of Pergamon. Three major wars referred to as the Three Mithridatic Wars after the name of their

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King; Mithradates, broke out. By 66 BC Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus had defeated the kingdom of Pontus and had moved into Syria with a strong army.

Queen Salome Alexandra of Judea died in 67BC, about the time Mithridates returned to Pontus, leaving 2 sons Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II. Hyrcanus II, the elder son, was not popular with the populace and mostly sided with the Pharisees, while his younger brother Aristobulus II was very ambitious, popular and tended to side with the Sadducees. Alexandra was very sick at the end of her days and Aristobulus began using his connections to secure himself a position of power against his mother's wishes who favoured Hyrcanus. After Alexandra's death, civil war was practically inevitable and combat opened near Jericho.

Both sides appealed to Pompey who ultimately chose to side with Hyrcanus and began combat against Aristobulus' forces who retreated to Jerusalem. Pompey laid siege, but forces loyal to Hyrcanus let the Romans in and they quickly took the Royal Palace while the Temple Mount and the City of David were held by Aristobulus. The bridge between the upper city and Temple mount over the Tyropoeon Valley was destroyed giving pause and allowing Pompey a chance to offer surrender terms but were rejected and Pompei laid siege inside the city.

After three months of building ramparts and moving siege towers into place, the Roman Forces were able to enter the Temple Mount from two sides, slaughtering the defenders and capturing Aristobulus himself. Pompey personally entered the Most Holy Place, desecrating it but then ordered it to be restored, cleansed and services restarted before he took Aristobulus back to Rome in chains. Although Hyrcanus was made High Priest, Rome incorporated Judea as a semi-autonomous territory, obliged to pay homage and tribute to Rome. From this point forward, Israel would not have full independence again until the 20<sup>th</sup> Century AD.

Rome was easily able to “*cast down some of the host and some of the stars to the ground, and trampled them*” by destroying the Jewish nation and the principles on which it lived. The High Priest now became an appointed office, eventually to be bought and sold by Roman governments until the ultimate destruction of the Jews in AD 70. At this time, he only “*cast down some of the host*”, not all of them because the



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destruction of these hosts was “[b]ecause of transgression”. The Jews had apostatised and violated their own laws, and their destruction was as a result of choices that they had made.

Rome, as we know, attempted to put itself above Christ, both spiritually and literally. In killing Jesus, they treated him as a common criminal, although it could be argued that they did not recognise who he was. When Octavian became Augustus and reorganised the Roman Republic into an Empire, the Imperial Cult was widely established to worship him as a God across the Empire, including Judea. Herod The Great rebuilt and expanded the Temple after its destruction by Pompey shortly after the Empire was reorganised and cult worship became an established practice in the cities of Sebaste and Caesarea, both predominantly non-Jewish. Emperor Caligula issued a decree that this be also done in the Temple but died before it was carried out. The Roman Empire, in possession of the ‘Babylonian Mysteries, “*exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host*” and demanded worship from all the world in place of the Most High God whose people they had defeated.

Furthermore, it would be a little over a century after Pompey’s desecration of the Temple when then General and later Emperor, Titus, would siege and destroy Jerusalem, burning the Temple and either exterminating or enslaving the priesthood and the Jewish people. The great Jewish Revolt launched in 66 AD was brutally crushed in 70 when Jerusalem fell to the Romans. Up until this time, the regular practices in the Temple; “*him the daily sacrifices*” had continued with minimal disruption and even under Ptolemaic and Seleucid dominion, the practices went unchanged. After the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem, this was no longer possible as the priests who were not were killed in the revolt were sold as galley slaves or crucified on the long road back to Rome. The temple goods were taken as spoils and now adorn the Arch of Titus to remember his Triumph commemorating the conquest of Jerusalem, and a 7 branched candle stick can clearly be identified.

There is an important parallel here that should be acknowledged. We have established that the ‘Little Horn’ is the transference of the Babylonian Mysteries through to Rome, but that requires the obvious predicate that these learnings originated in Babylon. It was in the prelude to Nebuchadnezzar II’s destruction of the Temple in 586 BC that



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Hezekiah is supposed to have hidden the Ark and certain other of the material of Solomons Temple as recorded in the Treatise of the Vessels. From that time the Ark disappears from the historic record and in the temples' rebuilding, it was replaced with a perfect cube of white marble. There is much more to be said about the implications of the loss of the Ark and corresponding Shekinah Glory, but for the sake of this analysis, it is important to note that the Babylonian Mysteries were involved in both the loss of the Ark and then the destruction of the temple. Both are also the only times when the "*daily sacrifices*" were majorly interrupted.

The transferral of the Babylonian Mysteries to Rome certainly gave them "*an army*" and that army was used "*to oppose the daily sacrifices*". As for when Rome "*cast truth down to the ground*", any cursory review of the Roman Catholic traditions that oppose God and place Mary above Jesus cannot deny their opposition to truth and right as far as God and the Bible are concerned. Yet, it also cannot be denied that both the Roman Empire and the Roman Church "*did all this and prospered.*"

I think it is important to also note here that the phrase "*by him the daily sacrifices were taken away*" does have a double meaning, especially in the context of the spiritual nature of Chapter 8. We have discussed the physical destruction of the 'daily sacrifice' but must also remember that there is a spiritual destruction too. To determine when the spiritual destruction of the 'daily sacrifice' was, we ask when it was either impossible or would no longer be necessary. The answer is found in the death of Jesus. Jesus' sacrifice on the Cross made the 'daily sacrifice' no longer necessary as the entire purpose of the 'daily sacrifice' was to point forward toward Jesus' death. With His death, the promise was fulfilled and the need to look forward was nullified. Today, we today are able to look back at His death and remember what He did for us and need no daily experience of shedding blood to acknowledge Him.

If Jesus' death is the element that nullified the 'daily sacrifice', the next logical question is who killed Jesus? Although the Jews gave Him up to the authorities to put him to death, Jewish law had long since removed the death penalty from their laws, and as a result it was the Romans who put Jesus to death. This is very much a two-edged sword. On the one hand, they accomplished his sacrifice making the 'daily sacrifice'

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unnecessary. Later on, the Romans would destroy the 'daily sacrifice' themselves as discussed above. This draws the simple conclusion that, no matter if you wish to look at the 'daily sacrifice' being 'taken away' as literal or physical, it was Pagan Rome that accomplished it.

*13 Then I heard a holy one speaking; and another holy one said to that certain one who was speaking, "How long will the vision be, concerning the daily sacrifices and the transgression of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot?"*

*14 And he said to me, "For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed."*

Daniel recognises that his people will be trampled under foot and the sacrifices they hold so dear are suspended. He asks an honest, innocent question; 'How long will my people be in bondage this time?' He understands the importance of the daily sacrifices and the people being repressed, but he is not taking in the fact that they could be entirely destroyed.

The reply comes from the watcher that, after "*two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed.*" He does not say that the Temple and services will be restored, he says that the "*sanctuary shall be cleansed.*" It is possible that Daniel recognises that the sanctuary services would not be necessary after Jesus' incarnation, but this is unlikely.

This reference has upset scholars for generations; what does the cleansing of the Sanctuary refer to and when will it happen. Also, we need to assess if this little horn and the one of the previous chapter are the same or if they are different..

### **Identifying that the Two 'Little Horns' are the same.**

Both Daniel 7 and 8 refer to a 'Little Horn' that will arise, speak blasphemously and act destructively and then fall by the power of God. These 'Little Horns' come from different places; Rome in chapter 7 and Greece in chapter 8, but both have timed prophecies attached to them. Both 'Little Horns' also negatively interact with God's

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people, either through their suppression in chapter 7; *“Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time”* or through the oppression of the Holy Temple in chapter 8 *“and by him the daily sacrifices were taken away, and the place of His sanctuary was cast down”*. Identifying that these two ‘Little Horns’ are the same power is an important exercise if we are to understand their intentions. To that end, let’s go back and critically analyse if these two powers are the same. We can compare them by reviewing the qualities like for like.

In Chapter 7 it states that the 'Little Horn' will *“speak pompous words against the Most High”* *“And shall intend to change times and law”* while Chapter 8 says he *“exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host”*. Broadly, these are the same thing as *“pompous words”* would be intended to present *“himself as high as the Prince of the host”* and he would try to do that by *“chang[ing] times and law”*. Furthermore, it says that the 'Little Horn' will *“persecute the saints of the Most High”* and that the *“saints shall be given into his hand”*, a very similar meaning to the 'Little Horn' *“cast[ing] down some of the host (of Heaven) and some of the stars to the ground, and traml[ing] them.”* This power will persecute all it sees as opposing it, and indeed *“by him the daily sacrifices were taken away, and the place of His sanctuary was cast down.”* The 'Little Horn' was given an army *“to oppose the daily sacrifices; and he cast truth down to the ground”*, truth held by the Saints. Indeed the only major difference between the two versions is where in Chapter 8 he *“grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Glorious Land”*, although it was in the *“Glorious Land”* - i.e. Israel - that the saints lived so this could be intended as persecuting truth across the world.

Such references make a very solid case that both ‘Little Horns’ are, indeed, the same power.

### **The 2,300 Days**

As Daniel watched the horrifying scene, one of the hold people who was watching alongside him asked a very open question. “How long will these events go on for?” The open element of this question makes it difficult to understand what events he is talking about. He asks:

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*“How long will the vision be, concerning  
the daily sacrifices and  
the transgression of desolation,  
the giving of both the sanctuary and  
the host to be trampled underfoot?”*

The phrase “*concerning the daily sacrifices*” is exceptionally broad and can include both the actual destruction of the ‘daily sacrifice’ but also the threat of destroying the ‘daily sacrifice’. The inclusion of the “*transgression of desolation*” also refers to the transgression mentioned in the previous verse, for which “*an army was given over to the horn to oppose the daily sacrifices*”. The “*giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot*” further reinforces that this is not only about the actual destruction of the ‘daily sacrifice’ but also about the events that led up to it.

The reply that comes back is similarly cryptic; “*For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed.*” It clearly neither says nor implies that the ‘daily sacrifice’ will be restored, nor that the people will be freed, but that “*the sanctuary shall be cleansed*”. We can imply, however, that if the sanctuary is to be cleansed, both the sanctuary and the people who know how to conduct the ceremonies that will clean the sanctuary must be freed to be able to perform those rites. We also can imply that, the people cleaning the sanctuary must similarly be clean, and therefore not tainted by the “*transgression*” that led to their destruction.

Using the day-year principle, we know that this refers to 2300 years in the far future from Daniel’s context. To find the right point for this, we need to find a time to start this prophecy when the Jews are starting to apostatise but are given an opportunity to repent, and a time in the future by Daniel’s standards, when the purity of the Jewish Faith is restored.

Fortunately, Daniel himself gives us a start-point for when the warning is handed down to the Israelitish people. In Chapter 9, written 27 years after Chapter 8, Daniel prays a desperate and emotional prayer of repentance, begging God to let his people have another chance; to not be destroyed and that the Holy City may be restored. At the very moment he finishes praying, Gabriel arrives to inform him that “*24 Seventy*

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*weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity*". The time period will be explained in Chapter 9, but Gabriel makes clear that the time frame is to end the same iniquities that brought on the 2,300 day prophecy discussed here in Chapter 8. While Daniel 9 is entirely concerned with a final opportunity for the people to repent and restore their relationship with God, Daniel 8 includes this opportunity at its beginning as explained above. We can, therefore, use the same start point for both prophecies.

Gabriel in Chapter 9, times the start of the prophecy "*from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem*" which is 457 BC, as will be explained in much more detail in that Chapter. We can therefore start our calculations from there:

457BC + 2,300 years leads us to 1843, the year that William Miller preached the second coming and when... nothing happened. There were no dramatic lights from the sky, no earthquakes, the Roman Church did not suddenly collapse. Indeed, there were no dramatic events that surrounded the 1843/44 period but when we consider the language being given here, there is little reason for there to be. If this is the point when "*the sanctuary shall be cleansed*", that, like the rest of Chapter 8, is an entirely spiritual event and there is no reason for there to be any cataclysmic events that surround it. So what type of spiritual restoration do we find in/around the 1843 time period?

As we have discussed heavily in other places, the major departure that the Roman church had from God's word was the Saturday Sabbath. During the spring of 1845, Captain Joseph Bates accepted the seventh-day Sabbath after reading a pamphlet by T. M. Preble – a Seventh Day Baptist minister in New Hampshire. Preble was also instrumental in the conversion of J. N. Andrews, the Adventist Church's first missionary, but would repudiate his work later in his life. Bates soon became known as the "apostle of the Sabbath" and wrote several booklets on the topic and would bring Ellen and James White to the Sabbath Truth. One of his first books, published in 1846, was entitled *The Seventh Day Sabbath, a Perpetual Sign*. The conversion from the Sunday-Sabbath to the Saturday-Sabbath, both for the Church and for the individuals inside the movement, was and is an intellectual conversion.

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Mrs White herself describes the movement back to the Sabbath Truth in this way: *“The Sabbath is not introduced as a new institution but as having been founded at creation. It is to be remembered and observed as the memorial of the Creator's work. Pointing to God as the Maker of the heavens and the earth, it distinguishes the true God from all false gods. All who keep the seventh day signify by this act that they are worshipers of Jehovah. Thus the Sabbath is the sign of man's allegiance to God as long as there are any upon the earth to serve Him. The fourth commandment is the only one of all the ten in which are found both the name and the title of the Lawgiver. It is the only one that shows by whose authority the law is given. Thus it contains the seal of God, affixed to His law as evidence of its authenticity and binding force. (E.G. White. Patriarchs and Prophets. P. 307)”*

With the return of the Sabbath Truth, we are once again certain to be working within what God's “times and law” are as established in Eden and at Mt Sinai. A spiritual resolution to a spiritual problem needs little major fanfare.

### **Gabriel Interprets the Vision**

*15 Then it happened, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and was seeking the meaning, that suddenly there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. 16 And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, who called, and said, “Gabriel, make this man understand the vision.” 17 So he came near where I stood, and when he came I was afraid and fell on my face; but he said to me, “Understand, son of man, that the vision refers to the time of the end.”*

Daniel is stunned and would later say he was sick watching this vision, and with good reason. His God has always explained things clearly, not working through the overly symbolic messages that foreign idols use and instead saying things plainly. The messages from Isaiah and others of his predecessors that he has studied have been relatively clear, although complex, and now Daniel is speaking in the symbology of the pagans.

To understand what he was seeing, *“that suddenly there stood before [him] one having the appearance of a man”*, but the fact that he has to say that this person had

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*“the appearance of a man”* would indicate they are not human. As a voice came from heaven, the name of this highest of Angels is revealed when he is commanded *“Gabriel, make this man understand the vision.”* Daniel, who may have started to think himself becoming corrupted by the foreign religions around him, now has before him the Archangel who replaced Lucifer as senior to all other created beings. And Daniel, naturally is afraid. But as that peaceful voice that commands the armies of Heaven speaks, he is reassured. The events that Daniel sees are not for now, but will be in *“the time of the end.”*

*18 Now, as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me, and stood me upright. 19 And he said, “Look, I am making known to you what shall happen in the latter time of the indignation; for at the appointed time the end shall be. 20 The ram which you saw, having the two horns—they are the kings of Media and Persia. 21 And the male goat is the kingdom of Greece. The large horn that is between its eyes is the first king. 22 As for the broken horn and the four that stood up in its place, four kingdoms shall arise out of that nation, but not with its power.*

Gabriel again takes Daniel into Vision and explains to him the events as were detailed previously. The ram relates to Medo-Persia and the goat to Alexander the great, after whose fall four kingdoms will arise.

*23 ”And in the latter time of their kingdom,  
When the transgressors have reached their fullness,  
A king shall arise,  
Having fierce features,  
Who understands sinister schemes.  
24 His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power;  
He shall destroy fearfully,  
And shall prosper and thrive;  
He shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people.*



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Gabriel then moves to the “*latter time of their kingdom*”. This indicates an overlap between the four kingdoms that succeed Alexander and the fierce king that shall arise. As we will see in chapter 11, the Roman Republic interacts closely with Antiochus IV and the Ptolemies, rising to power when both of those were in strong positions.

Gabriel explains that this king that shall rise, “[w]hen the transgressors have reached their fullness”. The Transgressors must be a group who transgress God’s law and violate his principals. This can only refer to Jewish populations as they are, at this time, still God’s people and are in the Babylonian bondage because of their transgressions; something Daneil will explain in detail in Chapter 9. As that chapter discusses, God’s people will be faced with a choice; will they choose to follow God and do his will or will they instead violate God’s law and attempt to do their own thing. The way that Daniel describes them here, they will choose the wrong path but this is not inevitable. As Daniel 9 clearly outlines;

*“Seventy weeks are determined  
For your people and for your holy city,  
To finish the transgression,  
To make an end of sins,  
To make reconciliation for iniquity,  
To bring in everlasting righteousness,  
To seal up vision and prophecy,  
And to anoint the Most Holy.”*

The Jews will be given a chance that history tells us they will squander. As we have seen from history, they will not turn back to God and will be destroyed as a result.

The transgression referred to here has several layers, some conscious some not. By the time he came to write this, Daniel was starting to see the effects of living in Babylon on his own people. The Babylonian Mysteries discussed above had begun to invade the Jewish scriptures too in the form of the Kabbalist texts which evolved from the Jewish Mysticism. While earlier scholars were taught to take God’s text at face value and to understand that the Lord is their guide and shield, as the Babylonian Mysteries became a part of Jewish culture and mysticism, scholars attempted to dig deeper into their history to search for hidden meanings. Combined with the other monotheistic teachings such as Zoroastrianism that were the norm for the Babylonian and later Persian cultures, the Israelites slowly but surely accepted practices that were not their

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norm prior to entering Babylon. Monotheism, today a staple of the Jewish religion, was a new innovation as several references to God in the plural, specifically Genesis 1:1 and 26, demonstrate the multi-theistic nature of God before Babylon. The practices that Jesus would decry when he cleansed the temple were also a part of the profitability of Persian religions that invaded Jewish Culture. Many of these practices, as discussed above, invaded the Christian Church and became a part of this new power Daniel refers to.

As we have also discussed, this new power was fierce, with sinister intentions of conquering the world. Rome did not intend that at its earliest; it did not seek to become a world power, but after the wars with Carthage it ended up with a world empire and then saw its role as promoting a form of peace around the world; the Pax Romana. This was how they were able to “*understands sinister schemes*” but did not, generally, use them themselves. Rome was much more interested in moving into a situation boldly, taking command of it and then letting the fallout happen that, generally, resulted in them being in control.

However, the power we are discussing in this chapter is not a physical power but a spiritual power. Papal Rome as opposed to Pagan Rome. The Papacy generally used other powers rather than its own, meagre forces to fight its wars and defend its interest; the greatest example being the Crusades. Pope Urban II’s speech at Clermont in 1095 was not to call his own armies to war but to direct the forces of the world who owed him homage, to go to war in his name. The Byzantine, Holy Roman and French Empires, among others, followed the will and instructions of the Papacy, going to war for the Church and not just for their own nations. In fact, due to this type of influence, the Papacy is the only institution in history that can be described as “*mighty, but not by his own power*” as all other similar institutions fought with their own troops.

However, we must remain true to the text and, at the time Daniel is discussing, the Papacy did not exist. The Papacy first became evident around the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century AD while Daniel is saying that this fierce king shall arise “*in the latter time of*” the Grecian kings. This is why we have gone to such painful lengths above to describe the ‘Little Horn’ transferring his power and authority from Greece to Rome. The line as to when Pagan Rome ends and where Papal Rome begins is blurred both in Daniel and in History, and

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he, clearly, considers them to be linked although not united. Both Pagan and Papal Rome “*destroy[ed] fearfully,... prosper[ed] and thrive[d]... destroy[ed] the mighty*” and, in their own ways, “*also the holy people.*” Pagan Rome attempted to exterminate both the Jews and early Christians while Papal Rome waged wars against the Sabbath-keepers and anyone that made a claim they disagreed with. It did so without mercy and it hardened its heart against the chance that they might be wrong. Anyone that tried to bring reform and debate into the Church was opposed, disgraced and, often, killed. Schism brought crusade and more death. “[T]he *holy people*”, like the Waldenses, who preached the Sabbath Truth and that Christ alone was the intercessor between God and Man, were similarly oppressed and attempted to be exterminated. Far more ink has been spilt by better writers about the grave sins of the Papacy against those trying to bring reform to the Church that I need not further explain here.

*25 "Through his cunning*

*He shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule;*

*And he shall exalt himself in his heart.*

*He shall destroy many in their prosperity.*

*He shall even rise against the Prince of princes;*

*But he shall be broken without human means.*

“*[C]unning*” does not necessarily mean subterfuge and “*deceit*” does not imply conspiracy, simply unfair dealings. We find both in Papal but not Pagan Rome. Pagan Rome attempted, so far as possible, to deal honestly and clearly with its trade and war partners while Papal Rome assumed that its authority coming from God meant that it could do practically whatever it wanted. But we should consider what these verses mean in the context of both Pagan and Papal Rome.

“*Through his cunning He shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule*”. In other words, because and by his strategies and plans, he will not only permit but encourage lies and untruths to become the norm and heartfelt beliefs. Any cursory evaluation of Catholic dogma, with its promotion of Mary and its replacement of Jesus with a priest for intercession clearly demonstrates that like and falsehoods were the norm when the Roman Papacy held influence over all the world. What’s more is that the Papacy knew these things and, during the first Council of Constantinople in 381 AD that the

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supremacy of the Roman bishop was secured over that of Constantinople. In time, the Papacy would be declared infallible, the height of the Roman bishop “*exalt[ing] himself in his heart*” and trying to dominate the world. The Pope claims dominance over all followers of Jesus and goes so far as to claim that there is no salvation outside of the church, a doctrine known as extra Ecclesiam nulla salus which was declared in 1215 by the Fourth Lateran Council: “*There is one universal Church of the faithful, outside of which there is absolutely no salvation*”.

This is the height of spiritual arrogance and conceit, an attack on the role and authority of Christ himself who said that he alone is the mechanism for which salvation may be accomplished. In John 9, Jesus himself made this clear. “*25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. 26 And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die”* “. He did not say that he would establish a church that would offer salvation, or that you would need priests to confess to or that he would build an institution that would be able to decide who is righteous and who is not. He said, simply, “*I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me... shall live*”. The claim of the Papacy to say that there is absolutely no salvation outside of the universal Church of the faithful is an affront to Christs’ claim to be “*the author and finisher of our faith*” Hebrews 12:2. Truly, this challenge qualifies as the Papacy attempting to “*rise against the Prince of princes*” at the very least.

But, again, we have to remember that such a “*rise against the Prince of princes*” should also consider Pagan Rome as they were the power that put Christ to death. Those who held the Babylonian Mysteries were the same one that attacked the Prince of all princes, the King of kings and the supreme lord of Salvation.

Between, broadly, 500 and 1800AD, anyone that came against the Papacy would be cut down and destroyed. Any group or individual who questioned Papal authority or doctrine would be exterminated and their names made mud throughout the known world. The Papacy attempted to depose Elizabeth I of England by supporting the Spanish Armada, advocated the extermination of Jews and opposed any consultative appeals by protestants and reformers alike. Appeals for councils were rebuffed, declared heretics and the state was then instructed to “*destroy many*

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*in their prosperity*". There are countless examples, but much more importantly was how the church wielded what was perceived as its authority over the populace through guilt and shame. People who were living prosperous and happy lives were told to donate huge sums to buy indulgences or go on long pilgrimages that bankrupted them, all to the benefit of the Roman Church.

When the end came, it came "*without human means.*" The Roman Church was as near to the height of its influence and power when, in 1793, the French Revolution brought the Cult of Reason which made the most catholic nation on earth suddenly atheistic. In a very short space, the French overthrew their priests and made themselves answer not to God but to their science. This would quickly become Humanist, but the damage was done. In 1798, Napoleon sent his general, Berthier, to capture the pope while he moved into Malta to remove the last military force that the Roman Church had; the Knights Hospitaller. Despite their promises to defend the Papacy, no nation moved to stop the French and the Papal states were eliminated. Famously, at his coronation in 1804, Napoleon insulted the new Pope Pius VII by taking the crown out of his hands and crowning himself as Emperor.

This turnaround was so swift and so sudden that it was certainly a defeat "*without human means.*" The Papacy was defeated by its greatest defenders none stood to defend him. There was no political buildup to his defeat, no overt heresy, no will from humans to defeat the Papacy. It was simply the next step on Napoleon's move to greatness.

*26 "And the vision of the evenings and mornings  
Which was told is true;  
Therefore seal up the vision,  
For it refers to many days in the future."*

*27 And I, Daniel, fainted and was sick for days; afterward I arose and went about the king's business. I was astonished by the vision, but no one understood it.*

Daniel is told that the time prophecy he saw, the "*vision of the evenings and mornings*" was not to be explained at this point. I would be in the next chapter but was

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not explained here. Instead, Danile is left sick, “*astonished by the vision*” and clearly asked everyone he knew about it because “*no one understood it.*” He was troubled but continued to do “*the king’s business*”, working to make life for his people better.

God does not always explain things to us the way we would have them explained. That is natural; it is for God to understand and not us. Nevertheless, Daniel knew that the vision was true and was ready to do his part in accomplishing it.