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~ Part 1B (The Little Horn) ~

9 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 description of the *"little horn's"* activities is helpful but doesn't explain everything we might want to know, especially the question: from which of the *"four conspicuous horns"* would this past-and-future leader arise?

Historical hindsight tells us plainly that ancient Syria fulfilled the *Little Horn* role in ancient times. But what about the future destination of this revelation? The answer to that question becomes clear when we take a sort of bird's-eye view of chapters 7, 8, and 11, each of which has something to say about this *"horn"* that is to become so powerful. And just to be a little more clear, each chapter pictures the *Little Horn* rising in the End of the Age era, not just in ancient times. The picture below illustrates the pattern in these chapters, pointing again to the nation of Syria as the apparent continuation of the *Little Horn* in the End of the Age era.



It was written of this *Little Horn* that in the End of the Age his Beast-empire *"shall devour the whole earth".* (7:8,23) Of course, it's hard to imagine how the small nation of Syria could by herself possess the capability of even conquering the Middle East, much less the world. But she could act as the staging ground and be the key partner for a much stronger nation. (This possible future scenario is explored more thoroughly here and here .)

If the *Little Horn* is to rise up again in Syria, then likely, the ancient kingdom/ruler served as a sort of model of what the End of the Age empire would look like. Ancient Syria was ruled in its final years by Antiochus Epiphanes (175-164 B.C.). This is significant because here was an Antichrist-like figure whose brutal rule illustrated in many ways what the rule of the final Antichrist will be like. In the Seleucid dynasty he was the final ruler of any importance and gained control of Israel and over Egypt (except the important city of Alexandria). Presumably, the modern version of the final ruler will make similar advances in the Middle East. (Egypt and Israel are mentioned specifically as targets of invasion in the End of the Age in chapter 11, verses 41-42. How exactly the eastward expansion will transpire is not clear yet.)

What is portrayed in these chapters resembles, as noted already, what is called in photography a "double exposure" – a picture of an historical scenario from two different eras of time. To our finite minds, this seems

odd, but for those from the Spirit Realm, where time and history are perceived differently, this concentrated view is probably the natural way for them to view the events taking place in the earthly realm. The vision's ultimate fulfillment will come soon in the End of the Age era – something that Gabriel makes very clear further ahead. But because history tends to repeat itself, similar scenarios have popped up at different times in different locations.

Incidentally, the *Little Horn* was called *"little"*, probably because the first Seleucid ruler started out as a minor figure, a general who worked for the Ptolemaic king from Egypt, but was later given the territory of Syria. Another translation puts it this way, *"Out of one of them came another horn, which started small but grew in power."* (NIV) The Seleucid dynasty became the most extensive and powerful of all the Greek kingdoms after Alexander's death. At various times it gained control of the *"south"* [some of Egypt] and *"the east"* [Babylon, Persia and the countries of the east], and *"the glorious land"* [Israel]. Compared to the other Greek kingdoms, it *"grew exceedingly great."*

So the *Little Horn* rose AFTER the rise of the other Greek generals. This resembles what chapter 7 notes about the *Little Horn*, that he *"shall arise AFTER them"* – that is, after the rise of *"ten horns"* who, presumably, enter the world stage ahead of the *"little horn"* in time. (7:24) So like his counterpart in the ancient Syrian kingdom, the future *Little Horn* starts off later and so is *"little"* at first but ends up greater in strength.

By the way, in this part of the vision, seen from Daniel's point of view, it is not surprising that we hear the term *"glorious land"* – a reference to the sacred homeland from which Daniel and the Jewish people had been exiled some 50 or so years earlier. For Daniel the land of Israel was the focus of his concern… and the location focus of where God was moving in the Earth at that time in history.

But strangely enough, when Gabriel interprets the vision further ahead (verses 19-25), he doesn't mention the *"glorious land"* at all. It's not that Israel won't get invaded in the End of the Age; it's just that Israel is no longer the central focus of God's attention, so the location focus has changed.

And where is the location focus now? The entire world – which has been infiltrated throughout with those "fifth columnists" known as the followers of Christ, those who uphold the Light of God in those dark days before the Second Coming. And that is also the time when the entire world, or most of it at least, will have become subject to its final anti-God ruler. That was a point mentioned in the previous revelation, by the way: *"it* [the *Little Horn*] *shall devour the whole earth."* (7:23)

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10 It grew great, even to the host of heaven. And some of the host and some of the stars it threw down to the ground and trampled on them.
11 It became great, even as great as the Prince of the host. And the regular burnt offering was taken away from him, and the place of his sanctuary was overthrown.
12 And a host will be given over to it together with the regular burnt offering because of transgression, and it will throw truth to the ground, and it will act and prosper.

Daniel continues to describe what he sees, and no doubt, what stood out to him were those events and activities that affected the Jewish people and their nation. He sees the horn warring against the *"host of heaven"*. That simply means the army of heaven, which would have meant in those days the people of God, the Jewish nation. And indeed, Antiochus Epiphanes, besides his military exploits, did trample on them and on the *"stars"* (a common expression used to refer to princes and rulers, especially religious rulers – the godly kings, priests, and prophets who were ruling ancient Israel).

Previous conquerors were mainly interested in capturing Israel's territory or wealth or work force. But the peculiar feature about Antiochus Epiphanes: he was mainly interested in getting rid of Jewish religious beliefs so that he could hellenize Israel – that is, spread Greek religion and culture in a nation that had stubbornly refused to accept it.

In addition, *"he even exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host."* (8:11, NKJV) It has been a common practice of emperors to exalt themselves into divine status. However, when dealing with Israel, most rulers figured it would be less trouble just to leave the people alone to

worship as they pleased. But not so with Antiochus. Like Pharaoh in the Book of Exodus, he opposed God and His people to an extreme degree.

***It became great, even as great as the Prince of the host.* (8:11)**

In the ancient time Antiochus Epiphanes supplanted the high priest's role. And insofar as he was persecuting the people of God in those days, he was, in an indirect way, exalting himself against the Light of God, against Christ, and in this way making himself *"as great as the Prince of the host."* It is no surprise then to learn that his name Epiphanes means "God manifest". Apparently, he even went so far as to claim himself to be Zeus incarnate, the chief of the Greek gods.

At the End of the Age, history will repeat itself when Antichrist arrives and tries to take the place of Christ, the true High Priest, and act as if he were the world's savior. And in an even more direct way, as Gabriel explains, *"he shall even rise up against the Prince of princes."* And this we will look into further ahead.

***And the regular burnt offering was taken away from him [the Prince of the host], and the place of his sanctuary was overthrown.* (8:11)**

In the original Hebrew, the wording for the phrase *"regular burnt offering",* was shorter – just *"the regular".* Here is what two scholarly works have to say on this subject:

> **The word [*Hataamiyd,* Hebrew for *"the regular"*] much rather comprehends *all that is of permanent use in the holy services of divine worship* (Hgst., Häv., Hofm., Kran., Klief.). Thus interpreted, the prophetic announcement corresponds with history; for, according to 1 Macc. 1:45, Antiochus gave orders that they should "forbid burnt-offerings, and sacrifice, and drink- offerings in the temple; and that they should profane the Sabbath and festival days." [from *Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament*, 1866]**
>
> **He *took away the daily sacrifice*. The morning and evening lamb, which God appointed to be offered every day upon his altar to his honour, Antiochus forbade and restrained the offering of. No doubt he took away all other sacrifices, but only the daily sacrifice is**

> **mentioned, because that was the greatest loss of all… God's people reckon their daily sacrifices, their morning and evening exercises of devotion, the most needful of their daily business and the most delightful of their daily comforts, and would not for all the world part with them. (from *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, 1706-1721)**

In keeping with his desire to uproot the Hebrews' whole belief system, and in keeping with his view of himself as a divine being, as told in the 1st Book of Maccabees, Antiochus, besides ending the daily sacrifice, also forbade circumcision, ordered the destruction of Jewish writings, banned the Jewish daily sacrifice, and went as far as offering a pig on the temple altar, a huge abomination to the Jews. And in one vicious campaign, he killed 80,000 people. (For a fuller description see Appendix 1.)

Still, although he was a great persecutor of God's people, nevertheless, Antiochus Epiphanes was only a forerunner, an example, of the evil one who is to come – a sort of intermediate fulfillment of the final *Little Horn*, as others were also.

In the ancient time the temple (the *"sanctuary"*), was taken over by the Greek king and desecrated. At the End of the Age, a similar event will occur. There are different theories about this. This website has proposed that the future *"holy place"* in Jerusalem will be desecrated by the entrance of a desolating *"abomination"* – a weapon or vehicle of war of some kind. (See the series of posts, *Unravelling the Mystery of the Abomination*.)

The persecution in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes was comprehensive. And this compares well with the picture for the future that Gabriel leaves us with: worldwide warfare and persecution that is to come at the End of the Age. *"His power shall be great… and he shall cause fearful destruction… and destroy mighty men and the people who are the saints… he shall destroy many."* (8:24-25)

In Gabriel's interpretation of the vision (verses 19-25), nothing is said about the regular sacrifices, the temple, or even the *"glorious land"*. Evidently, these are not the most important features in Gabriel's version of what the vision meant. The closest he comes to what Daniel said is that

this future ruler would try to *"destroy… the people who are the saints"*, climaxing with his ultimate rebellion of rising *"up against the Prince of princes".* (8:24-25)

For Daniel the persecution and desecration of the Jewish temple was the all-important issue. And there seems little doubt that this was part of the original vision. And no doubt, something similar will come in the End of the Age. And it will serve as a marker, a sign for believers that Christ's Coming is just around the corner. Also, it is the trigger event that starts the era of Great Tribulation and organized, worldwide persecution.

Although Gabriel doesn't allude to the temple desecration event in this chapter 8, he does give a full account of how the End-of-the-Age desecration will come about during his visits to Daniel in chapters 9 and 10-12. (See series of posts, "Unravelling the Mystery of the Abomination" and in the Daniel 10-12 series, posts 3-E and 3-F.) For indeed, this will be an important and key turning-point event, to which Jesus Himself referred (in Matthew 24:15 and Mark 13:14).

***And a host will be given over to it together with the regular burnt offering because of transgression* (8:12)**

The NIV translation seems to express this more clearly: *"because of rebellion, the LORD's people and the daily sacrifice were given over to it* [the *Little Horn*]*."* (See Appendix 2 for commentary on how this passage might apply to the events of ancient times.)

Although Antiochus' activities were cruel and blasphemous, nevertheless, it was because of the Jewish people's falling away from faithful obedience to God and His ways that the king was allowed to go on his rampage. The ancient Hebrew word used in verse 12 was reserved for a particular kind of *"transgression"* – namely, that of turning away from God.

For the same reason, some 400 years earlier, Jerusalem and the first temple had fallen to the Babylonian conquerors (as Daniel's prayer in chapter 9 makes very clear). Later in Roman times about 250 years after the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, again Jerusalem fell because of Israel's sins – their refusal to receive their Messiah and instead crucify Him.

Regarding the fall of Jerusalem in the 5th century B.C., author John Lennox has expressed well the background to that tragic event, which could apply just as well to what happened during the rule of Antiochus Epiphanes:

> **Judah had failed to grasp that God's loyalty to his own character, and therefore to his own creatures, has serious implications. Some of Judah's leaders had fallen into thinking that, because their nation had been chosen to play a special role for God in history, it did not really matter how the leaders or the nation behaved. This was dangerously irresponsible and undermined the moral fibre of the people, because it led to the rationalization of corrupt and immoral behaviour that was incompatible with the law of God, albeit widely practised in the surrounding nations.**
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> **[from *Against the Flow: The inspiration of Daniel in an Age of Relativism*, pg. 13, by John C. Lennox, first edition published by *Monarch Books* in 2015]**

And in the End of the Age, again the Jewish people, as we can see already, have departed from the ways of God – by their mistreatment of the Palestinian population and belligerence towards the nations around her. And once more, the same fate will befall the nation of Israel shortly before the Second Coming. (See post "Israel's Role in Bringing about Her Own Downfall".)

History repeats itself, and what we are getting here in this revelation is a composite picture, showing what has happened throughout history, yet having its particular focus, primarily, on what is to happen at the End of the Age (and secondarily, what happened during the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes).

Daniel's attention was focused on what was to befall his people at some point in the near future. And the vision managed to bring into one concentrated revelation that event and the similar event to happen in the End of the Age. And in a sense it echoes the various similar scenarios that have transpired all though history in different parts of the world. [See Appendix 3 about one such scenario from the 1600's in India]

Of course, the context has changed from ancient times when religious

worship centered around temples (such as in Jerusalem) and the various physical offerings and sacrifices that were presented as expressions of devotion. In New Testament times, however, Christ introduced a deeper level of worship:

> ***But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.*** **(John 4:23-24)**

And as for our struggles and battles with the world, the apostle Paul noted,

> ***For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*** **(Ephesians 6:12)**

> ***The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*** **(2Corinthians 10:4-5, NIV)**

God is no longer enshrining His Name in one particular nation, nor does He expect us to fight with *"the weapons of the world"*. Instead, His Name (His influence) has spread throughout the whole world and is enshrined now in the hearts of His people everywhere. And they are being prepared, not to rule one nation only, but the entire world will become their domain. Those whose hearts are regenerated and made anew by the Holy Spirit power of God, they are the ones destined to be the rulers and citizens of the world of the future.

Spiritual, rather than physical, warfare is the name of the game in this day and age. Great battles are being waged in the Celestial Domain, as evidenced in certain Scriptures (such as Revelation 12:7, Daniel 10:20-21). And the followers of Christ are the modern day *"host of heaven"* and *"stars".* Further ahead in his explanation, Gabriel explains more clearly that these are *"the people who are the saints".* (8:24)

They are engaged in the struggle to bring the love, peace, and enlightenment of God into the world of humanity. They are gifted in the knowledge of how to wage the New Testament "weapons" of spiritual warfare. Some of these are mentioned by Paul the apostle in his epistle to the Ephesians: belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, shoes fitted with Gospel preparation (witnessing), shield of faith, helmet of salvation, sword of the Word, the power of prayer. (6:10-18) And there are others that could be added: praise, spirit helpers, resting in the Lord, keys of the Kingdom, brotherhood, and more.

All that to say, what Daniel observes here in verses 9-12, and what the angel Gabriel explains in verses 20-25 applies on both levels: that of the ancient era when much of the warfare was conducted physically; and that of the modern era when spiritual warfare is being waged to bring hearts and minds back into fellowship with the Almighty.

The grand foresight of God is evident here. For although the vision, ultimately, was to be fulfilled in the End of the Age, it applies easily to both eras of history, and for that matter, in every historical era. For God's people have often had to suffer being *"cast to the ground"* and *"trampled"* on in some campaign or other of organized persecution.

It will throw truth to the ground (8:12)

As one commentator has expressed it, Antiochus Epiphanes

> **"cast down the truth to the ground, trampled upon the book of the law, that word of truth, tore it, and burnt it, and did what he could to destroy it quite, that it might be lost and forgotten for ever." (from *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, 1706-1721)**

Not only in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, for Gabriel explains that in the End of the Age *"he shall make deceit prosper".* (8:25) Doesn't that sound like what is happening today? Except for a few, virtually unknown news outlets, the long arms of modern media – TV shows, movies, newspapers, the internet, the works – are all engaged in casting truth down to the ground. Media propaganda is more extensive (worldwide) and powerful than at any other time in history. And in the wrong hands will have no trouble deceiving the world into going along with the plans of the

forces of spiritual Darkness. (To see how media deception has been working in the American nation, see the opening paragraphs of Appendix 3 in *Fall of the Great Harlot* series.)

***And it will act and prosper* (8:12)**

Or in the NIV it is translated, "*He did all this and prospered. It prospered in everything it did.*"

Daniel's description of the vision ends here with the oppressive king "prospering". And we are left hanging; it looks as if evil has conquered. The oppressive ruler has entered the temple, brought a halt to religious practices, and set up his abominable offering. Is that the end of the story?

Not quite. For a peculiar scene shift takes place. Daniel overhears two angels or spirit beings talking, and their subject of conversation happens to deal with the subject of how long this desecration would last:

Continue to: Part 1C (Interjection from Two Holy Ones)

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APPENDIX 1

The sacrifice that was offered daily in the temple, morning and evening, was suspended. A full account of this may be found in 1 Macc. 1:20-24,29-32,44-50. In the execution of the purposes of Antiochus, he "entered the sanctuary, and took away the golden altar, and the candlestick, and all the vessels thereof; and the table of showbread, the pouring vessels, etc., and stripped the temple of all the ornaments of gold." After two years he again visited the city, and "smote it very sore, and destroyed much people of Israel, and when he had taken the spoils of the city he set it on fire, and pulled down the walls thereof on every side." Everything in Jerusalem was made desolate. Her sanctuary was laid waste like a wilderness, her feasts were turned into mourning, her sabbaths into reproach, her honor into contempt." Subsequently, by a solemn edict, and by more decisive acts, he put a period to the worship of God in the temple, and polluted and defiled every part of it. "For the king had sent letters by messengers unto Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, that they should

follow the strange laws of the land, and forbid burnt-offerings, and sacrifices, and drink-offerings in the temple; and that they should profane the sabbaths and festival days, and pollute the sanctuary and holy people; set up altars, and groves, and chapels of idols, and sacrifice swine's flesh, and unclean beasts; that they should also leave their children uncircumcised, and make their souls abominable with all manner of uncleanness and profanation; to the end they might forget the laws, and change all the ordinances," 1 Macc. 1:44-49.
(from *Barnes' Notes on the whole Bible*, originally published in 1853 by Albert Barnes and James Murphy)

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APPENDIX 2

He [Antiochus Epiphanes] did not burn and demolish the temple, but he cast it down, when he profaned it, made it the temple of Jupiter Olympius, and set up his image in it. He also cast down the truth to the ground, trampled upon the book of the law, that word of truth, tore it, and burnt it, and did what he could to destroy it quite, that it might be lost and forgotten for ever. These were the projects of that wicked prince. In these he practised. And (would you think it?) in these he prospered. He carried the matter very far, seemed to have gained his point, and went near to extirpate that holy religion which God's right hand had planted. But lest he or any other should triumph, as if herein he had prevailed against God himself and been too hard for him, the matter is here explained and set in a true light.

[1.] He could not have done this if God had not permitted him to do it, could have had no power against Israel unless it had been given him from above. God put this power… that sword into his hand by which he was enabled thus to bear down all before him. Note, We ought to eye and own the hand of God in all the enterprises and all the successes of the church's enemies against the church. They are but the rod in God's hand.

[2.] God would not have permitted it if his people had not provoked him to do so. It is by reason of transgression, the transgression of Israel, to

correct them for that, that Antiochus is employed to give them all this trouble. Note, When the pleasant land and all its pleasant things are laid waste, it must be acknowledged that sin is the procuring cause of all the desolation. Who gave Jacob to the spoil? Did not the Lord, he against whom we have sinned? Isa 42:24. The great transgression of the Jews after the captivity (when they were cured of idolatry) was a contempt and profanation of the holy things, snuffing at the service of God… therefore God sent Antiochus to take away the daily sacrifice and cast down the place of his sanctuary. Note, It is just with God to deprive those of the privileges of his house who despise and profane them, and to make those know the worth of ordinances by the want of them who would not know it by the enjoyment of them.

(*Exposition of the Old and New Testaments* by Matthew Henry, 1707-10)

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APPENDIX 3:

The last Mongol ruler of significance, Aurangzeb (ruled 1658-1707), established a wide empire in India. Unlike his predecessors, who followed policies of religious tolerance, Aurangzeb persecuted the followers of Hinduism, destroying their temples and imposing Islamic law and practices. In the meantime the Maratha-Hindu king, Chhatrapati Shivaji, was rising to power and trying to convince Aurangzeb to be more tolerant. The Muslim ruler continued his extremist policies, however. After his death, in the power vacuum that followed, the Marathas became the dominant rulers in India for most of the 1700's.

This bears some resemblance to the scenario mentioned in Daniel 8: the Seleucid king rose to power and persecuted the followers of Judaism, and after his death the Maccabee family rose up to throw off the Syrian oppression and establish an independent kingdom.

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Continue to: Part 1C (Interjection from Two Holy Ones)