1 – Introduction
2 – Part 1A (Ram and Male Goat)
3 – Part 1B (The Little Horn)
4 – Part 1C (Interjection from Two Holy Ones)
5 – Part 2A (Gabriel Appears)
6 – Part 2B (Gabriel Explains the Vision)

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~ Part 2A (Gabriel Appears) ~

15 When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it. And behold, 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, and it called, "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision."
17 So he came near where I stood. And when he came, I was frightened and fell on my face. But he said to me, "Understand, O son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end."
18 And when he had spoken to me, I fell into a deep sleep with my face to the ground. But he touched me and made me stand up.
19 He said, "Behold, I will make known to you what shall be at the latter end of the indignation, for it refers to the appointed time of the end."

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***When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it* (8:15)**

Any revelation from God is bound to have a great deal of meaning, even the smallest details. So interpretation of a revelation can be just as vital as the revelation itself. Daniel had already described the vision, which was slanted a little, it would seem, according to his own particular viewpoint centred around his concern as to what would befall his own people, the Jewish nation. But, as a genuine truth-seeker, he was remaining open to receiving the full understanding of what the vision meant. And sure enough, that understanding came, for…

***Behold, there stood before me one having the appearance of a man* (8:15)**

At this point comes a dramatic upgrade in Daniel's connection to that

Other Realm, the Fifth Dimension, the Celestial Realm, or however we might want to call it. The archangel Gabriel appears and talks directly with Daniel. Such interaction between a supernatural being and a being of flesh is almost unheard of in the experience of most people. Apparently, it can be a difficult experience too, and even though Gabriel had *"the appearance of a man",* it was still too much for Daniel, and he ends up falling *"into a deep sleep with my face to the ground"* (8:18)

But this kind of direct connection does have its advantages, for the resulting prophetic information can be more accurate and detailed than when such information comes indirectly via prophecy or dreams. For example, Gabriel tells Daniel exactly who the ram and he-goat are – the kingdoms of Medo-Persia and Greece. (8:20-21)

In the vision received a couple years earlier, Daniel did communicate with a spirit being. The scenario was similar, springing from his desire to understand the vision: *"I approached one of those who stood there and asked him the truth concerning all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of the things."* (7:16) In this case, it seems Daniel was not fully awake but was in a semi-dreamlike state. *"Daniel had a dream and visions of his head while on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream, telling the main facts."* (7:1, NKJV)

Daniel was able to get a lot of information about the future this way, or at least *"the main facts"*, but it seems as though the Lord was preparing him for an even better way of recording revelations – through getting it while wide awake. The vision in chapter 8, along with the explanation, were both received in a fully awake state and not just through the medium of prophecy or dreams, but by direct communication with the archangel Gabriel.

Nevertheless, his experience of two years earlier (communicating with a spirit being while in a dreamlike state) would have prepared Daniel for the experience he is to undergo now (communicating directly with the angel Gabriel). And his experience in chapter 8 would have prepared him for his next two encounters with Gabriel, which are described in chapter 9 and chapters 10-12.

And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, and it called,

***"Gabriel, make this man understand the vision."* (8:16)**

Evidently, Daniel wasn't "getting it" quite the way he was supposed to. And so, the high-ranking arch-archangel Gabriel is sent, presumably by a Being of higher rank, perhaps by the Lord Himself. Gabriel is the same angel who, a few centuries later, appeared to Zacharias the father of John the Baptist and to Mary the mother of Jesus. (Luke 1:19, 26) As a matter of interest, the angel Gabriel hasn't stopped trying to influence humankind. In a prophetic message, received in March 1997 from Gabriel, he is alleged to have imparted the following message about himself:

"I am the keeper of the reservoir, the Word of God."

That seems to be Gabriel's responsibility – to see to it that the Word of God gets "downloaded", we might say, into the earthly realm. And here in this chapter 8, that's his job description: *"make this man understand the vision"* (presumably, because Daniel doesn't have the correct, or full, understanding that was required).

Note here that the interjection of the two *"holy ones"* about the 2,300 days was not part of the original vision. And the focus is shifting now back to the vision and to a more complete understanding of it. The message about the 2,300 days has its place, of course. Like many Old Testament prophecies that dealt with near fulfillments regarding ancient history and politics, it seems more likely that it concerned events that were to happen in the near future of ancient times rather than in the distant future. But now the focus is shifting on to the main and ultimate fulfillment of the vision – how it will play out in the End of the Age.

From this point on, in the rest of the Book of Daniel, the angel Gabriel himself is speaking directly to the prophet Daniel. But such contact with the angel was difficult: *"I was frightened and fell on my face… I fell into a deep sleep with my face to the ground."* (8:17-18) Similar to other accounts recorded in the Old Testament, there came the reaction of fear and the feeling that death was imminent. (Interesting examples are in Judges 6:22-23 and 13:21-22.)

"But he touched me, and stood me upright."

Seeing Daniel's predicament and knowing that he is supposed to deliver a message to him, Gabriel uses his supernatural abilities to restore Daniel into an alert and confident state of mind.



> **As commanded, the angel goes to the place where Daniel stands. On his approach Daniel is so filled with terror that he falls on his face, because as a sinful and mortal man he could not bear the holiness of God which appeared before him in the pure heavenly being. At the appearance of God he fears that he must die… But the angel, in order to mitigate his alarm, calls him to take heed, for the vision relates to the time of the end. [That is, he didn't have to worry; the vision had nothing to do with him personally, nor even his immediate historical situation.] The address (v. 17), "son of man," stands in contrast to "man of God" (= Gabriel), and is designed to remind Daniel of his human weakness (cf. Ps 8:5), not that he may be humbled (Hävernick), without any occasion for that, but to inform him that, notwithstanding this, he was deemed worthy of receiving high divine revelations (Kliefoth).**
>
> **(from *Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament*, 1866)**

> **Is there any one of us who would not be awed into profound silence if a heavenly messenger should stand before us to disclose what was to occur to us, to our families, to our friends, to our country, in far-distant years? (*Albert Barnes' Notes on the Whole Bible*, published in the 1800's)**

"Understand, O son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end… at the latter end of the indignation, for it refers to the appointed time of the

***end.”* (8:17,19)**

Gabriel has just made his appearance and seems intent on making sure Daniel understands that *“the vision is for the time of the end”*. And what happens? Daniel falls into *“a deep sleep”*. (8:18) Gabriel revives Daniel and explains once more, *“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.”* (8:19, NKJV)

Obviously, Gabriel felt it was important for Daniel (and us) to be aware of this. For even though the vision could apply to the events surrounding the ancient Hebrew nation, to apply the vision strictly to those events would be missing the main thrust and purpose, that *“the vision is for the time of the end… at the latter end of the indignation”*. (8:17,19) That pinpoints accurately enough the End of the Age era – those final days when God’s indignation against evil will bring to a close the present era of history (by destroying the Dark forces that have dominated in the Earth since the Beginning of time). And it will come at *“the appointed time of the end.”* (8:19) As if to say, it’s for a distant future age… *“when the transgressors have reached their limit”,* as Gabriel puts it further ahead. (8:23)

So let us fast-forward into modern times and take a look at how history will repeat itself in a modern secular culture. During the ancient time of Antiochus Epiphanes, the Jewish people were forsaking their God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, and being drawn into Hellenism and the Greek pantheon of gods. That form of worship was like an ancient version of our modern-day diversion into secularism, materialism, and existentialism – beliefs that deny the existence or relevance of any kind of supernatural Being or Higher Power, replacing that with “worship” of the natural realm and the manmade world of human society.

In both eras the issue is the same: the once godly society has departed from its Creator and has become a *harlot* devoted to other gods from the realm of spiritual Darkness, thereby paving the way for the rise of a demagogue replacement as the new object of worship.

Not only in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, but during Israel’s prior history, nearby powers were allowed to invade when the nation had fallen

away from the right principles and practices that were supposed to be the characteristics of a nation that worshipped the God of Heaven and Earth. The two major invasions came from Assyria and Babylon, and several lesser troubles came at different times in Israel's history.

So the event highlighted here, during the rule of Antiochus Epiphanes, is not the only one. History repeats itself. But it is the one that best illustrates the preoccupation of the future Antichrist to establish a false worship system – in this case, the modern religion of no-religion, one that is opposed to any kind of belief in a Higher Power – with the object of worship being the demagogue Antichrist figure and the new utopian world order established by him and the False Prophet.

And the reason the Antichrist is allowed to do so is clear from passages in Revelation 17-18. There we read about the *Harlot* empire, symbolic of a nation (America) that has forgotten the God that she once respected. Elsewhere in the New Testament, we read that the End of the Age era will feature a great falling away that will permit the Antichrist to rise up to chastise the backslidden empire of the *Harlot*:

> ***"For that Day*** **[the Return of Christ]** ***will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."*** **(2Thessalonians 2:3-4, NKJV)**

Just as Antiochus Epiphanes tried to take the place of God in an ancient time when the Jewish people had departed from the faith, so the modern day *"man of sin… the son of perdition"* will rise up against a future *Harlot* empire – the very one that is now trying desperately to maintain her dominance over the world – and he will become the Antichrist demagogue, worshipped by a world that has lost its faith in the true God.

By the way, the term *"Harlot"* is a metaphor used to describe a once godly nation that has fallen into corruption and disobedience to God – like a harlot who is unfaithful to her husband. Several times in the Old Testament, ancient Israel was referred to in this way for those times when she had wandered too far from the path of righteousness that she was supposed to be following. (See here in this Post.) And again in our modern

day, Israel has gone far off track – a reality that is examined in a post called "Hoodwinked" and in this post, "Israel's Role in Bringing about Her Own Downfall".

Both Israel and America are in the same boat together. In the world they are considered to be the places where God's Name is honoured. But their activities and bad behavior and influence are instead bringing dishonour to the Name of God.

It was *"because of transgression* (sinning against God)" that allowed Antiochus Epiphanes to go on his rampage against ancient Israel. For similar reasons, it is not difficult to see that in modern times both Israel and America are in line to receive God's chastisement via the *Beast* (as foretold in Revelation 17-18).

As the angel Gabriel explained it, this will be the era *"when the transgressors have reached their limit"* (8:23) – a time that will be marked by grievous disobedience, rebellion, and transgression emanating from the *Harlot* empire.

In fact, the situation has become so bad that God says, *"her sins have reached to heaven".* (Revelation 18:5) (Learn more in the Revelation 17-18 series of Posts.) As a result God Himself is the one who allows the *Harlot* to get invaded by the *Beast* (Antichrist) – as evidenced in this passage from the Book of Revelation:

> ***And the ten horns that you saw, they and the beast will hate the prostitute* [or *harlot*]*. They will make her desolate and naked, and devour her flesh and burn her up with fire, for GOD HAS PUT IT INTO THEIR HEARTS TO CARRY OUT HIS PURPOSE by being of one mind and handing over their royal power to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled.* (Revelation 17:16-17, ESV) (To understand what is meant by *"the ten horns"*, see the post "Ten Horns Coming into View?")**

Regarding these drastic measures, it may help to keep certain Scriptures in mind. These apply, sadly enough, to the spiritual condition of America, and to a lesser degree, other nations associated with her:

> ***"Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows,***

***that will he also reap.”* (Galatians 6:7) *“How much sorer punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who… has outraged the Spirit of grace?”* (Hebrews 10:29)**

Continue to: Part 2B – Gabriel Explains the Vision