

**THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION: A STUDY**  
**(Daniel 8:5-14)**

By Apostle Don McIndoo (Sept. 2006)

**Commentary by Albert Barnes (1851), Fausset (1871), and Matthew Henry (1712):**

**1. (Vs. 5)** - **“...an he-goat came from the west...”** The angel, Gabriel, told Daniel in Vs. 21 that this was the king of Grecia. **“...touched not the ground.”** **“implies the incredible swiftness of his conquest; he overran the world in less than twelve years.”**<sup>1</sup> (Fausset) The **“notable horn”** refers to Alexander the Great.

**2. (Vs. 6)** – tells us **“...he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river,”** Verse 20 tells us the two horns refer to the kings of Media and Persia.

This is an apt description of what we can now read in history. Alexander’s conquest began on the banks of the **River Granichus**, near the **Sea of Marmara** after he had crossed the **Dardanelles** with an army of 30, 000.

[\(Show Map # 1 – Persian Empire\)](#)

Here he encountered Darius III with a much larger army. But Alexander personally led his army in a fight from which Darius could never recover. When Darius retreated, Alexander decided to push southward and went on to deliver Asia Minor and Egypt from Persian control.

[\(Show Map # 2 – Grecian Empire\)](#)

**3. (Vs 7)** - Alexander conquered Persia, and none **“...could deliver the ram out of his hand.”** Not even **“...the immense hosts of Persia could save it from the small army of Alexander.”**<sup>2</sup> (Fausset)

**4. (Vs 8)** - **“...when he was strong, the great horn was broken”** Matthew Henry writes, **When Alexander was about 26, he had become ruler of the known world. When he was about 33 years of age, in his full strength, he “...died of a drunken surfeit overindulgence ...”**<sup>3</sup> Then we read, **“and for it came up four notable ones...”** Matthew Henry tells us, The kingdom was divided among **“Alexander’s four captains”** into Syria, Egypt, Asia and Greece.

**5. (Vs 9)** - **“Out of one of them came forth a little horn...”** This ruler was Antiochus Epiphanes, a direct descendant of King Seleucus, first king of Syria. Barnes takes care to note, **“This little horn sprang up out of one of the others; it did not spring up in the midst of the others as the little horn of ch. Vii:7.8 did among the ten others.”**<sup>4</sup>

**Why was this pointed out so carefully?**

And Fausset wrote, **“not to be confounded with the little horn of the fourth kingdom in ch. 7.8. ...it is not an independent fifth horn,...but arises out of one of the existing horns. Antiochus Epiphanes is meant. None of the previous world-rulers had systematically opposed the Jews’ religious worship. Hence the need of prophecy to prepare them for Antiochus.”**<sup>5</sup>

[\(Read from Antichrist Paper\)](#)

[\(Read Adventist Position\)](#)

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<sup>1</sup> Jamieson, Fausset, Brown, *Commentary: Critical, Practical and Explanatory, Vol. Two*, 1871, p. 629.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 629

<sup>3</sup> Henry, Matthew, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*, p. 1448

<sup>4</sup> Barnes, Albert, *Notes on the Old Testament*, Book of Daniel, Chapter 8, p. 108.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, Fausset, p. 630.

**6. (Vs 10)** – “He would **“...cast down some of the host...”** This tells of his crimes against the princes and peoples of Israel. In **1 Maccabees 1:41** we read, **“The king then issued a decree throughout his empire: his subjects were all to become one people and abandon their own laws and religion.”**

**7. (Vs 11)** - **“...he magnified himself even to the prince of the hosts...”** Fausset writes, **“i. e., God Himself, the Lord of saboath, the hosts of heaven and earth, stars, angels and earthly ministers.”**<sup>6</sup> And **“...by him the daily sacrifice was taken away.”** The morning and evening sacrifice was taken away by Antiochus.

Furthermore, **“...the place of his sanctuary was cast down.”** Fausset writes that Antiochus robbed it of its treasures, but he did not strictly **“cast it down. So that a fuller accomplishment is future.”**<sup>7</sup>

However, Barnes said that after taking away all the sacred vessels used in the services, he returned two years later and burned the city of Jerusalem.

**8. (Vs 12)** – **“...an host was given him against the daily sacrifice...”** The *holy people* were given up to him to tread upon, together with the daily sacrifice. Then we continue with the verse, **“...by reason of transgression...”** Fausset writes that heathen practices had entered into Jerusalem.

He then refers to **(Isaiah 59:14)**

Verse 12 continues, **“...it cast down the truth to the ground...”** Matthew Henry adds that Antiochus tore up and burned the book of the law.

**9. (Vs 13)** - Then Daniel heard a **“saint speaking”** This probably refers to two angelic beings. One asked the question and the other gave answer, but it was for Daniel’s benefit. **“How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation...”** In other words, **How long shall the daily sacrifice be suspended?**

Fausset writes that this means **literally, “making desolate, i.e., Antiochus’ desolating profanation of the temple.”**<sup>8</sup> He then says this is the same **literal meaning** for similar words in Daniel 11:31 and 12:11, as well as Christ’s comment in Matthew 24:15, but in those places it is **referring to Rome.**

**10. (Vs 14)** – **“...he said unto me”** the answer given is to Daniel, not the questioner. **“...two thousand and three hundred days...”** Barnes then goes through an extensive list of all the actions Antiochus took against Israel, her worship and the temple. He states they began in **August of 171 B. C.** and they continued until Judas Maccabees brought it to an end and cleansed and rededicated the temple on **December 25, 165 B. C..** Barnes then states, **“The time then specified by this would be six years and a hundred an ten days.”**<sup>9</sup>

Barnes quotes **Josephus**, in his *Jewish Wars*, as writing that Antiochus **“...spoiled the temple, and put a stop to the constant practice of offering a daily sacrifice of expiation for three years and six months.”**<sup>10</sup>

These two statements do not seem to agree, but **Fausset’s** notes bring them into

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<sup>6</sup> *Op. cit.*, Fausset, p. 631.

<sup>7</sup> *Op. Cit.*, Fausset, p. 631.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 632.

<sup>9</sup> *Op. cit.* Barnes, p. 114.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.

harmony. He writes, “*Six years and 110 days. This includes not only the three and a half years during which the daily sacrifice was forbidden by Antiochus, but the whole series of events whereby it was practically interrupted ...*”<sup>11</sup>

*“...then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.”* Judas Maccabees celebrated the “feast of dedication” after this cleansing. We read in **2 Maccabees 10:5**, “*The sanctuary was purified on the twenty-fifth of Kislev, the same day of the same month as that on which the foreigners had profaned it. The joyful celebration lasted for eight days...*”

(Read also **John 10:22**)

(dem note) – I was somewhat surprised that Barnes did not use the “day equals a year” Principle he normally uses. But instead he used the specific dates supplied by history and 1 and 2 Maccabees as his reference points.

**Fausset** explains the reason that the greater detail to historical facts and dates given in Daniel’s prophecies than are found in New Testament prophecies is that Israel, not having a view of immortality as did the Christians, “*...could only be directed, and reassured, to the earthly future...*”<sup>12</sup>

**11. (Vs 17)** – “*Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision.*” The angel assures Daniel that he shall be made to know. And when the event is completed, **Matthew Henry** adds, “*...then the vision shall be made plain and intelligible by the event, as the event shall be made plain and intelligible by the vision.*”<sup>13</sup>

**12. (Vs 19)** – “*...for at the time appointed the end shall be.*” Like so many other prophecies revealed by the Lord, “*It is fixed in the divine counsel, which cannot be altered...*”<sup>14</sup> (**Matthew Henry**)

All three of these scholars correctly note that while many commentators equate these events with the prophecy of the “little horn” of Chapter 7:25, and, hence, to the supposed “antichrist” of the last week of tribulation.

**Albert Barnes** states emphatically the passage in Daniel 7 “*... had no reference to Antiochus...*”<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Op. Cit., Fausset, p. 632.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 632.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 1450.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 1450.

<sup>15</sup> Op. Cit. Barnes, p. 108.