**Surviving in Dangerous Times – Lesson 6 – Daniel 8**

I. Review

II. Some preliminary remarks

A. Dream is similar to Dan 2 and 7, but covers much less calendar time

B. In contrast to Dan 2 and 7, the symbology is clearly explained

C. Purpose of this chapter and reason for symbols being named

1. Exile nearing its end – prophesied to be 70 years

2. God wants to give His people information to prepare for what is coming next, not just for the end times when judgment pronounced and victory won

3. Chapter written in Hebrew, not Aramaic, so the Jews could easily understand it when the events happened

4. End of the world not just around the corner – may have long tedious way to go

D. Daniel does not know the timing of the extended period of history described in the dream, just the sequence of events

1. The timeframe will be long – a long view of history for the people

2. Remember: last writings of OT were about 400 BC; God is giving Israel info on what would happen into 2nd century BC

E. Best way to discuss chapter is to discuss the dream and its interpretation simultaneously

III. Daniel has a second vision (v1-2)

A. Timeframe – 551 BC – 3rd year of Belshazzar – nearing the time of the end of exile

B. Location – in the citadel of Susa in the province of Elam beside the Ulai Canal (Neh 1:1, Est 1:2,2:8, Is 21:2, Jer 49:34-39)

1. Daniel not actually there physically, just in the vision

2. Susa – one of four capitals of Persia (~250 mi east of Babylon)

IV. Content and interpretation of the dream (v3-14, 20-25)

A. A ram (v3-4, 20) – kings of Media and Persia

1. Had two horns – one longer than the other and came out last – Persia

2. Was standing in front of the canal

3. Butted to the west, north and south – no other beasts could stand before the ram

4. Did as he pleased and magnified himself – kingdom lasted over 200 years

B. A one-horned male goat (v5-8, 21)

1. Came from the West – flew over the ground

2. Had conspicuous horn between its eyes

3. Approached the ram and charged him in mighty wrath

a. Shattered the ram’s two horns

b. Ram had no strength before the goat – superpowers not necessarily safe places

4. Magnified himself exceedingly

5. Large horn is its first king – Alexander the Great of Greece

C. A four-horned male goat (v8, 22)

1. Large horn broken

a. Four conspicuous horns arise in its place

b. Spread toward the four winds of heaven

2. Four horns represent four kingdoms coming from united Greece

a. Would follow the first king, but would not have his power

b. 22-year civil war – then Greece divided into 4 regions and placed under control of four generals

(1) Cassander – Macedonia

(2) Lysimachus – Thrace

(3) Seleucus – Syria and Babylonia

(4) Ptolemy – Egypt and Arabia

D. A small horn arises from one of the four horns (v9-14, 23-25)

1. New king would arise

a. Grew greatly toward the south and east, toward the Beautiful Land

b. Grew up to the host of heaven and caused some of the host and some of the stars to fall to earth – heavenly battle going on as well as here

c. Trampled down the host

d. Magnified itself to be equal with Commander of the host – reeks of arrogance – attempts to eradicate all vestiges of the Jewish faith

(1) Removed the regular sacrifice from Him

(2) Threw down His sanctuary – set up idols

(3) All this happened due to transgression of the host – sin’s results

(4) Truth flung to the ground

(5) Horn will do its will and will prosper

(6) All of this would have historical relevance later to the people of Israel

2. Daniel heard angels speaking – question arises about duration of these events

a. Concerned about transgression of the host – would cause horror

b. Would last 2300 days before restoration of the holy place – a long but limited time

3. New king not named here, but all agree it was probably Antiochus IV Epiphanes – reigned from 175-164 BC

a. During latter period of Greek rule when transgressors had run their course

b. Would be insolent and skilled in intrigue

c. Would be powerful, but not by his own power

c. Would destroy to greater extent than ever before

d. Would prosper and perform his own will

e. Would destroy mighty men and holy people

f. By shrewdness would cause deceit to succeed by his influence

g. Would magnify himself

h. Would destroy many while they are complacent

i. Would oppose Prince of princes but would be broken by supernatural forces

j. Triggered rebellion by Jews led by Maccabees – temple cleansed and rededicated in 164 BC

V. Daniel’s initial reaction: seeks to understand the vision and when he does, utter exhaustion (v15-19, 26)

A. One looking like a man stood before him between the banks of the Ulai

1. Commanded Gabriel to explain vision to Daniel (Lk 1:19,26)

2. Gabriel approached Daniel

a. Daniel frightened and fell on his face

b. Told Daniel that the vision pertained to an appointed time at the end

B. Daniel was stunned, stupefied in a deep sleep, but Gabriel touched him and he stood erect

C. Would let Daniel know what would occur at the final period of indignation

D. Told that the vision is true

E. Told to keep the vision secret because it talks about the distant future

VI. Daniel’s final reaction (v27)

A. Daniel exhausted and sick for days – physically identified with his people

B. Went back to doing the king’s business

C. Astounded by the vision because there was none to explain it – many details left out

VII. Lessons for our day

A. Jesus has given us similar warning – Jn 16:1-4

B. Wait patiently for final justice to be revealed – II Pet 3:8-10

C. Scriptures written for encouragement and hope – Rom 15:4-6