

PROPHECY UNCUT

The Antics of the 'Little Horn' in Daniel 8

INTRODUCTION

In a previous study, the little horn of Daniel 8 was identified as a symbolic representation of Roman Catholicism. Without a doubt, this conclusion may seem rather strange when one considers that everything that is said concerning the little horn's spiritual antics is negative. Today so many people from all walks of life hold Roman Catholicism in high regard. So why would the Bible be so negative in its description of this entity? Furthermore, what is the actual meaning of the symbolic language used to describe the spiritual antics of the little horn?

Unfortunately, the answers to these questions come as rather shocking revelations to those who seriously search them out. Nevertheless, there is freedom and protection in knowing and practicing the truth.

WHAT ARE THE SPIRITUAL ANTICS THAT THE LITTLE HORN OF DANIEL 8 GETS UP TO?

Daniel 8:10-12

The vast majority of the Daniel 8's focus on the little horn is devoted to describing the nature of its spiritual attack. What follows is a description of each of the six key areas highlighted in Daniel 8:10-12 that shed light on the deep spiritual issues that make the little horn's spiritual antics so offensive in the sight of God:

Daniel 8:11; Daniel 12:3; Daniel 7:25

1. "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."

The casting down of the stars in this context is not a reference to the angelic host, as is the case in other passages of Scripture (see Rev 12:7-9). The chronology pertaining to the little horn's spiritual phase and antics places this event well within the New Testament era. Thus, it would be difficult to conceive how Satan could literally cause angels to fall or, alternatively, do them harm when he has no access to heaven.

Rather, this characteristic is best explained by the angel interpreter in verse 24 as pertaining to the "mighty and holy people".

Elsewhere in Daniel we also have the true followers of God described symbolically as shining "like the brightness of the heavens" (Dan 12:3). Thus, God regards His true followers, walking in truth and righteousness, as starry lights. It is precisely this group that the little horn would seek to persecute and exterminate.

This interpretation harmonizes with Daniel 7's vision in which the little horn is pictured as persecuting "the saints of the Most High" (Dan 7:25).

It is no secret that the papacy has historically been one



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of the greatest persecutors of all time. One scholar summarizes the persecution of the middle ages in these words: "The Crusades of the eleventh through the thirteenth centuries against 'infidels' in the Middle East were holy wars directed by the papacy. From these, the idea of crusades against Christian 'heretics' was developed, leading to attacks on the Albigenses in southern France and the Waldenses in northern Italy in the thirteenth century. A later form of the inquisition was developed in Spain. And since Spain controlled a considerable portion of the New World, the inquisition was exported to Latin America where it was carried on until the early nineteenth century.... From Spain, this type of activity was also exported to Holland where the Duke of Alva led the Spanish troops in suppressing and killing Dutch Protestants in 1568. France also saw aggressive action against Protestants. Thousands of Huguenots fell on St. Bartholomew's Day in 1572.¹ Again, when the French king revoked the Edict of Toleration in 1685, many of the Huguenots had to flee to other countries."²

**Daniel 8:12;
Daniel 10:13, 21, 12:1**

2. "Exalted Himself as High as the Prince of the Host."

The Prince of the Host seems to be the little horn's primary target. It is the Prince of the Host's position that the little horn seems to covet.

Two different words are used in the book of Daniel, both of which are translated into English as "Prince". In Daniel 9 the Hebrew word *nagid* is used – a Messianic term. In Daniel 8 the word *sar* is used – a political term indicating rank or position. The use of this term, in conjunction with the fact that the name of God is not mentioned in this chapter seems to indicate that the Prince is the main character on the side of God, much like Michael is pictured in Daniel 10:13, 21, 12:1 where the same Hebrew word is used in identifying him as "Prince".

The little horn is unable to do the Prince of the host any harm personally. But its attempt is to become as great as the Prince of the host as if to take his position and place. Yet, while the little horn cannot physically depose the Prince of the host or do Him personal harm, it does attack the earthly followers of the heavenly Prince along with the Prince's sanctuary.

¹ Wikipedia, *St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St_Bartholomew%27s_Day_Massacre

² Shea, *Daniel: A Reader's Guide*, 180. See Also Wikipedia, *Persecution of Christians*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persecution_of_Christians



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Daniel 8:11;
Exodus 25:30;
Exodus 27:20-21;
Exodus 28:29, 38;
Exodus 29:38, 42;
Exodus 30:8;
1 Chronicles 9:32;
1 Timothy 2:5

3. "The daily *sacrifices* were taken away" [italicized portion is as found in the NKJV version of the Bible].

The word translated as "daily" is the Hebrew word *tamid*. It is used in various places in the Old Testament Scriptures to indicate an activity or service, which takes place on an ongoing, daily basis.

For instance, every morning and every evening the priest that served in the Old Testament earthly sanctuary had to offer the morning and evening sacrifices (Ex 29:38, 42). The priests were also tasked with ensuring that the lamps of the seven-branched candlestick were trimmed and kept burning day and night. The lamps were to be maintained each evening and each morning (Ex 27:20-21). Furthermore, incense was to be burned on a daily basis upon the golden altar in the holy place of the sanctuary (Ex 30:8). The twelve cakes of showbread were to be kept before the Lord continually (Ex 25:30) and changed every week on the Sabbath day (1 Chron 9:32). The High Priest was to represent the children of Israel before the Lord on a continual or daily basis as he ministered in the sanctuary (Ex 28:29, 38).

From this brief survey of how the word *tamid* is used in connection with the Old Testament sanctuary services, it becomes immediately apparent that *tamid* has a far broader scope than referring simply to the aspect of sacrifice. Rather it pertains to all services and activities that took place within the sanctuary on a daily, regular basis.

It should come as no surprise then to discover that in Daniel 8 the word "sacrifices" does not occur in connection with the word *tamid* or "daily". The Bible translators have added this word in an attempt to help the English Bible reader make sense of the word *tamid* or "daily". However, in translating *tamid* as "daily sacrifices", the English translation loses more meaning than it gains because the broad scope of this word's usage in connection with the Old Testament sanctuary and its services is virtually stripped away.

If an English word is to be added to clarify the meaning of "daily", it should be the word "ministration" or "services". Thus, the little horn seeks to usurp the "daily ministration" or the "daily services".

Taking into account the broad scope of the "daily" services of the Old Testament sanctuary as well as the fact that everything in the Old Testament sanctuary system was an illustration of the ministry of Jesus as humanity's sacrifice and



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High Priest, the little horn is pictured as seeking to rob Jesus of His intercessory ministry.

“The small horn now represents the heavenly ministry of Jesus Christ as requiring human or priestly activities on earth to mediate its grace to humanity. Human intermediaries have been interjected between God and the people.”³

Through the system of Roman Catholicism, the sinner seeking repentance has his attention directed away from the true ministry of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary toward an earthly priesthood, an earthly confessional box, a myriad of saints as well the apparent intercessory benefits of Mary the mother of Jesus. All of this functions as a counterfeit of the true heavenly ministry of Jesus as the one and only intermediary between God and humanity (1 Tim 2:5).⁴

**Daniel 8:11;
Hebrews 8:1-2;
Hebrews 9:11-12, 15**

4. “The place of His [the Prince of the Host] sanctuary was cast down [by the little horn]”.

The book of Hebrews points out that since the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus the only true sanctuary that is in operation is the one located in heaven (Heb 8:2; 9:11). It is here that the true High Priest ministers for humanity’s salvation, applying the merits of His sacrifice to the repentant sinner’s account (Heb 9:15).

Considering that the little horn has been identified as Rome in both its imperial and papal phases as well as the fact that the particular phase under examination at the moment pertains to the papal phase, which begins well into the New Testament era, its attack on the sanctuary should be understood to be directed toward the true heavenly sanctuary where Jesus ministers as the true High Priest. As such, the casting down of the “place of His sanctuary” is symbolic language indicating some sort of spiritual attack – a physical attack is impossible.

The word translated as “place” (*makon*) can alternatively be translated as “foundation”. In other words, the crime committed by the little horn is that it launches a spiritual attack on the very foundation of the heavenly sanctuary.

What is the foundation of the heavenly sanctuary? In the simplest of terms, it is the all-sufficient, once-for-all-time sacrifice of Jesus (Heb 9:11-12). Furthermore, because of this

³ Shea, *Daniel: A Reader’s Guide*, 181.

⁴ Shea, *Daniel: A Reader’s Guide*, 173.



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sacrifice, Jesus has become the one and only mediator between God and humanity (1 Tim 2:5) in the heavenly sanctuary (Heb 8:1-2).

Taking all this into account, it would seem that the little horn provides some sort of alternative plan of salvation, an obstruction that prevents the sinner from coming to a true understanding and experience of Jesus' sacrifice and subsequent High Priestly intercession in the heavenly sanctuary.

Through such practices as penance, the mass (which is regarded as a repeat sacrifice of Jesus each time it is performed), sale of indulgences etc., the Roman Catholic believer is taught that to be saved one needs to add one's own efforts and works to what Jesus accomplished on the cross. These practices undermine the once-for-all-time and all-sufficient sacrifice of Jesus, which is the foundation for the operation of the heavenly sanctuary and His High Priestly ministry in behalf of repentant sinners. This is the meaning of the "place" or the "foundation" of His sanctuary being "cast down".

Daniel 8:12

5. "Because of transgression, an army was given over *to the horn* to oppose the daily *sacrifices*."

Considering the fact that the daily ministration referred to in Daniel 8 has been demonstrated to refer to the true ministry of Jesus, which takes place in the heavenly sanctuary from the time of His sacrifice on the cross, it makes sense to understand the army here spoken of as a spiritual army – not a military army.

The warfare that the little horn engages in is a spiritual war. The target of the warfare is the ministry of Jesus. The attack is directed toward heaven itself, which cannot be affected by military conquest nor reached physically.

Hence, it makes sense to interpret the army that the little horn commands as the earthly priesthood of the Papacy, which stands between humanity and Jesus, who is supposed to be the only true Mediator between God and humanity.

Daniel 8:12

6. "He [the little horn] cast truth to the ground. He did *all this* and prospered."

No more needs to be said about how the little horn cast truth to the ground. It is evident from the other descriptive phrases examined in connection with the spiritual antics of the



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little horn in Daniel 8 that the Papacy has indeed cast the truth of Scripture regarding the plan of salvation, the sacrifice of Jesus and the High Priestly ministry of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary to the ground.

The last part of the prophecy pertaining to the antics of the little horn indicates that despite the spiritual atrocities that it commits, it would prosper. Truly, this element has been fulfilled by the Papacy.

At present Roman Catholicism claims the largest, worldwide membership of any Christian denomination. For the majority of the period known as the Middle Ages it was the sole organized Christian church. Both during the Middle Ages and increasingly during the present age, the Roman pontiff and the church he represents is looked to as the most important and influential spiritual leader. Furthermore, both during the Middle Ages and at the present time, the Roman Catholic Church has amassed incredible reserves of financial wealth.

It does not matter how one measures prosperity, the Roman Catholic Church system has indeed prospered in the past and continues to do so even in the present.

SUMMARY & APPEAL

John 8:32

Rather than heaping praise and admiration upon papal Rome, which claims to be God's true church and the authoritative representative of God on earth, Daniel 8's prophecy regarding the little horn unmasks this system's spiritual arrogance and theological presumption.

Indeed, as difficult as this revelation may be to accept, Daniel 8 serves as a divinely inspired warning to all sincere seekers after the truth to steer clear of the system of theology, the ecclesiastical structure and the religious practices of the Papacy or Roman Catholicism.

These prophetic insights are not an attack on individual Roman Catholics – many of whom are sincere, earnest and are truly seeking to live up to all the spiritual truth they know.

Rather, this message is motivated by God's love. In His divine wisdom, God sees and knows all secrets hidden from human view. God's intention is to see His beloved Roman Catholic people come to a fuller understanding of His character, His truth and His plan of salvation. The only way this is possible is to unmask the errors that bring spiritual darkness and entrapment.



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God's promise is that in accepting His truth, His children will experience true freedom (John 8:32). Will you receive the gift of God's freedom today? Will you choose to stand on the sure foundation of Scriptural truth even if it means some significant changes to your spiritual practice and beliefs? The reward will far outweigh the sacrifice and cost, which such changes incur?



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