

2017: Week 10

Sunday, March 5th 2017

"Not All Faiths Are the Same"

Daniel 8:25

²⁵And through his shrewdness he will cause deceit to succeed by his influence; and he will magnify himself in his heart, and he will destroy many while they are at ease. He will even oppose the Prince of princes, but he will be broken without human agency" (NASB)¹.

John did an excellent job this past Sunday guiding us through a difficult passage from **Daniel 8**. In this passage, we read about a vision that Daniel had received from the Lord. This vision reveals the ascendancy of both the Medo-Persian empire (represented as a ram) and the Greek empire (represented as a goat), and it also identifies a leader (represented by a small horn) who opposes the Lord and His people. There is much debate regarding the identity of this small horn. Two of the most probable explanations identify this small horn as one of the following: a) a past Greek ruler who opposed the Jews named Antiochus IV Epiphanes, or b) a future ruler who will oppose God's people who is more notably known by another name, the Antichrist .

Whether this text identifies a *past* ruler who already opposed the Lord or it is referencing a *future* ruler who will oppose the Lord, the bottom line is this– there are people out there who oppose the Lord and who oppose His people. We live in an age in which we don't want to say anyone is "wrong." We like to think that everyone is "right," even when it comes to religious beliefs. The Bible makes it quite clear that not all paths are equal paths, not all gods are the same god, and not all faiths are the same faith. The Lord God says in Isaiah, "I am the LORD, and there is no other; besides Me there is no God" (**Isaiah 45:5**). Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me" (**John 14:6**). John also tells us, "And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life" (**1 John 5:11–12**). A person only receives fellowship with God on God's terms– through His Son, Jesus. Any attempt to obtain salvation apart from Jesus is not salvation but rather condemnation.

1. "THE TEXT"

READ Daniel 8

- When a new empire or leader achieved world dominance, what does the text state that they did after becoming victorious (end of **8:4**, beginning of **8:8**, beginning of **8:11**, middle of **8:25**)?
- Why is pride ("magnifying" oneself) ultimately an affront against the Lord?
- Why do you think the Lord allowed a king to arise (**8:23**) who would directly oppose Him and also successfully deceive and destroy many people?

2. "YOU"

- How might the Lord work through ungodly kingdoms to accomplish His will and expand His glory?
- How does this difficult text reveal God's ultimate power and authority over the nations?
- How might this text further reveal the idea that "not all faiths are the same"?
- How can you become better prepared for spiritual warfare that opposes both God and you (as a believer)?

3. "REMEMBER"

- **John 5:22–24** Jesus: ²²*For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, ²³so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. ²⁴Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.*"

FAMILY PRAYER: Dear God, You alone are God, and You alone are in ultimate control. Although the world around me may seem out of Your control sometimes, I know that You are good and You are in control. I trust You and am eternally grateful for Your love. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

¹ All Scripture notations taken from the **New American Standard Bible (NASB)** unless otherwise noted.