

THE GRECIAN HE-GOAT – A FEARFUL METAPHOR

ANCIENT GOAT ISSUES



Pope Gregory XIII used the rams head for his symbol with a serpent around it. The ram depicts he wanted to be like “God.”

Daniel’s View of “Greece”

Danielic Greece is depicted as a “belly and thighs of brass” (Daniel 2:32), a leopard-like beast with four wings and four heads (Daniel 7:6), and finally in Daniel 8:5-8, a he-goat. God does repeat messages. This is called recapitulation. But each time it is done, its renewed purpose must be carefully studied.

Frequently, prophecy has a minor literal meaning and a major symbolic or end-time meaning. Matthew 24 is a good example. The fall of literal Jerusalem would meet its greater application at the fall of Babylon and the end of all “ends,” which Jesus wanted us to carefully reference. Spiritually, that deeper meaning represented:

1. The end of apostasy and rebellion
2. When restoration and hope of the saints occurs

All apocalyptic prophecy draws on these two themes. They convey little story pieces of the great controversy’s final theme between good and evil. Together, a beautiful tapestry of God’s plans unfolds.

The bronze Greece represented a *secular* imagery of world powers. The leopard Greece symbolized *God’s view* of that kingdom in the context of good and evil, right and wrong. The he-goat Greece introduces a *very different* story. There are only two named kingdoms in Daniel 8. The historical sequence of Daniel 2 and 7 is not drawn upon. The kingdoms are sanctuary animal representations. Also, Daniel’s writing/language has changed from Aramaic of Daniel 2 to 7 to Hebrew. God has very different prophetic business in mind in this chapter!

Another profound issue – the prophecy relates to the end of time. The vision *begins* with the Medo-Persian ram. Babylon has already fallen. The he-goat persecutes the ram. The subsequent little horn persecutes God’s people. It also attempts to usurp Jesus – the Prince, or later called Messiah the Prince. Thematically and contextually, there is a dramatic tie to the Book of Revelation when Babylon is fallen (14:8, 19:2). There is a war and persecution on the saints (Revelation 11:2b, 15; 12:17; 13:7) and a beast and a woman blaspheme God (13:5-6, 17:3).

Additionally, Gabriel said that the vision of the ram, the he-goat and the little horn was for an “appointed time.” This time was already set aside as a divine period. In those Johanne prophecies and visions noted above, the persecution relates to 42 months (Revelation 11:2b) and “time times and an half ” (Revelation 12:14b). The blasphemous beast power (which persecutes) continues 42 months (Revelation 13:5). They are appointed times so distinct that the period is *numerically* given.

Stunning is the implication of one of Daniel’s final personal words: “How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?” (Daniel 12:6).

Jesus then answered that it would be at the end of “time times and an half” that the persecution of the “holy people” would be finished. Though not the purpose of this chapter to detail “time,” the “appointed time” or the period the ram, he-goat and little horn vision operates in, it is clearly within a three and a half year period at the end of time. Habakkuk 2:2-3 relates to this exact time. It follows a “tarrying time.” Jesus noted in a legal oath that when Sabbath issues are of concern, the delay in time (tarrying time) would cease (Revelation 10:6). This marks the onset of the three and a half years (Revelation 11:1-2).

What could a he-goat sanctuary animal represent in a very end-time setting? Its behavior is violent and hateful. That is another important clue. Chapters 8–12 of Daniel use real images and icons to represent a deep message. They are not seven-headed beasts or lion-like with iron teeth. There are kings, countries, powers, rivers, events and two sanctuary animals – one, a he-goat, reminiscent of the scapegoat, representing Satan, who receives repentant Israel’s sins and is driven into isolation in a desolate wilderness. Could the he-goat represent Satan’s activities during the “appointed time” just before his millennial wilderness or desolation experience? It is nothing other than that!

Reminiscing Over the Goat

There are several words that are Biblically translated as a “goat,” referring to the domestic animal:

Ez

- She-goat (Genesis 15:9, 30:35, 31:38)
- He-goat (Exodus 12:5, Leviticus 4:23; Numbers 28:15)
- It represents “strength,” especially in comparison to sheep.

Attud

- Rams (Genesis 31:10, 12)
- He-goats (Numbers 7:17-88, Isaiah 1:11)
- Goats (Deuteronomy 32:14, Psalm 50:13)
- Metaphor for princes or chiefs (Isaiah 14:9, Zechariah 10:3)
- Metaphor for leaders (Jeremiah 50:8)
- Metaphor for oppressors (Ezekiel 34:17, 39:18)

Gedi

- A kid (Genesis 27:9, 14, 17; Jude 6:19)

Sa'ir

- He-goat (II Chronicles 29:23)
- Simply a goat (Leviticus 4:24)
- Devils (Leviticus 17:7, II Chronicles 11:15)
- Goat of sin offering (Leviticus 9:3, 15; 10:16), scapegoat (Leviticus 16:7-22)
- This refers to a “shaggy” or “hairy” goat.

Tsaphir

- He-goat of goats (II Chronicles 29:21; Daniel 8:5, 8; Ezekiel 6:17)
- This word came in later into Biblical text.¹
- It symbolized power, especially over sheep (Ezekiel 34:17, Zechariah 10:3).

Tayish

- He-goat (Genesis 30:35, 32:14)
- It’s a colloquial word meaning that it is a “striker.”

Azazel

- Scapegoat (Leviticus 16:8, 10, 26). This was a *sa’ir*. When it was by lot declared to be the scapegoat, it was called *azazel*, meaning “the goat of departure” (Strong’s 5799).

There are two other Old Testament words used that represent wild goats (*yael* and *akko*).

In early Biblical times goats were used as metaphors for leaders, oppressors, devils and for power, especially over rams. The word *tsaphir* (*saphir*) used by Daniel is a later rendering of *sa’ir*, used for a he-goat, goat of sin offering, scapegoat and used symbolically for Satan. Intriguingly, the goat early on became a cultural symbol for evil, Satan and Satanism.

The pentagram, representing power as a goat, goes back in ancient history to shortly after the flood.

In the book *Symbols of the Prehistoric Mesopotamia* by Beatrice Laura Goff, the pentagram is shown and related to the Uruk (Biblical) Eriech period of Mesopotamian civilization (± 3500 B.C.). This insignia is located on potsherds in the location of Uruk (near the mouth of the Gulf), and is in the company of signs relating to the beginning of written language. In the book *Symbols of the Gods in Mesopotamian Art* by E. Douglas Van Buren, we find the Pentagram belonging to the archaic period UrukIV, and more frequently on Jemdet Nasr (3100-2900 B.C.) and Proto-Elamite tablets (3000-2500 B.C.). Van Buren explained, “The very sign used in the royal inscriptions to designate, in a somewhat obscure title, a power extending to the “four corners of the world” (represented by a goat pentagram imagery).²



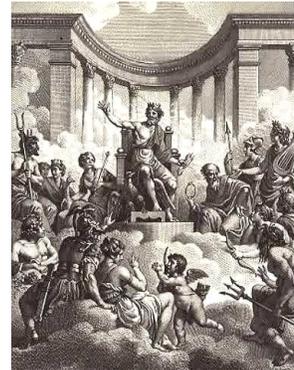
¹ Harris, R. Laird; *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Moody Press, Chicago), Vol. II, p. 776.

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ANCIENT GOAT GODS

The Goat God in Daniel's Time

Around 1100 B.C. as the ancient Greek Civilization began to coalesce, Greek mythology evolved. Their pantheon involved twelve gods. These were passed on by oral tradition (at times their numbers were 18, including Hades, the god of the dark underworld). Those early years lasted until 800 B.C. That is termed the "Greek Dark Ages." Here are the key gods:



Zeus

1. Zeus is the highest ranking and most powerful god, the ruler of Mount Olympus, god of weather.
2. Poseidon, together with Hades is one of the two next most senior gods, god of the sea, rivers and springs, floods and earthquakes.
3. Hera is the wife of Zeus, the goddess Queen of the heavens and stars and of marriage and fidelity.
4. Demeter is the goddess of the fertile earth and agriculture. Her bounty sustains mankind.
5. Artemis is the goddess of the hunt, animals, wilderness and the protector of young girls.
6. Apollo is the god of prophesy, light, music, healing, disease and medicine and archery.
7. Athena is the goddess of wisdom, the crafts (especially weaving, pottery and carpentry), inner beauty, education and war.
8. Hephaestus is the god of fire, workmanship, artisans and weaponry and the craftsman of the gods.
9. Ares is the god of war and slaughter.
10. Aphrodite is the goddess of love, sexuality, outer beauty and attraction.
11. Hermes is the god of guidance, travelers, oratory, shepherds, consolation and reunions, patron of thieves, and messenger of the gods.
12. Hestia is the goddess of the home, family and the hearth.
13. Dionysus is the youngest of the Olympians, and the god of wine, vegetation, fertility and the theater. He alternates with Hestia in ancient lists of the twelve Olympians.

In 776 B.C. the Olympic Games began. During this time, Israel had entered into its era of the kings. Its theocracy and cultic practices would be forever changed.

It was in this era, as Greece was coming out of its obscurity (though not a major power), that, in the Provincial state of Arcadia, a new god emerged. This area was a mountainous spot where agriculture did poorly. The populous was mainly herdsmen of cattle, sheep and goats. Though the Grecian people disdained these primitive mountain folk, their half man, half goat god Pan became a legend that spilled over the boundaries into many countries and influences the world today. It appears that Pan's mythical stories began between Isaiah and Jeremiah's time – shortly before the Babylonian captivity.

It is not coincidental that Daniel's he-goat, who represented men who were evil, had two good qualities. He played a little "pan" hand pipe instrument, whence came the name *panpipes*. He also was the god of the shepherds.

They sought to please him or fear would seize their flocks and themselves, especially when entering the woods. Hence, came the word pan-ic. His mythical father was the ancient god Hermes (noted above).



The demonized image of Satan evolved from Pan. His horns, cloven hooves and grotesque face depicted many images of Pan. He is a god that could bring terror to the strongest. His insatiable sex drive led him to have creaseless illicit relationships. His laugh struck awe and terror. Pan was a he-goat (shaggy and unkempt) with a man's head and upper torso. By the time Pan became a Greek mythical legend, the Greek alphabet had come into existence. The writings spread quickly. Songs were composed about Pan. One of the ancient countries that were influenced by this god was Egypt. The immoral imagery and unbridled self-pleasing caught the fancy of the peoples of Mendes, along one of the Nile tributaries.³



The Goat God of Egypt

It is fascinating that in one of Pan's mythical escapades related to a nymph goddess named Selene (she was a *celestial* goddess), she resisted his advances. To please her, Pan dressed himself in a white ram-skin, and she was seduced. *The he-goat wanted to appear like a pure white ram.* Satan also wanted to be like God (Isaiah 14:12-14). But he couldn't. Yet most of the world will follow him thinking he is.



In Egypt the Grecian god Pan influenced the ram god Ammon (initially called Banebdjed – the horn of Mendes). In more modern times it would be called the "Goat of Mendes." This was a god of voracious sexual appetite. Heroditus records Pan as being a *major* influence to the origin of this god.⁴ His description was incorrectly of a goat god and not a ram god.



In time, the sun god Re was joined to Ammon and became Ammon-Ra, worshiped in the city of Mendes, Thebes and later Siwa. The sun disc was then placed between Ammon's horns.

This became a hedonistic cult, worshiping a ram god and the sun. Some Egyptians even believed Ammon was the creator.

³ en. Wikipedia.org – Pan (mythology)

⁴ http://nefertiti.iwebland.com/texts/great_mendes_stela.htm

Daniel 8's Greek He-Goat is Highly Symbolic

At the time Daniel is getting this strongly typological vision of the ram and the he-goat, the mythical god Pan had emerged in Greece. Ironically, Daniel's he-goat represented Greece. Both visionary animals represented kingdoms with man/king horns giving them power. **Before** Alexander the Great, represented by the single (unicorn) horn coming out of this visionary goat, the ram god Ammon-Ra was established in Mendes, Egypt. Also, in the mythology of Pan, the story of the goat-man dressed up like a ram to attract a lover had circulated widely. This is where the symbolism of Daniel's he-goat gets exciting.

Literalism either pushes the interpretation into the precincts of history or attempts to create an end-time dispensation-like application to current stories of the Middle East. The theme of Daniel 8–12 is restoration, vindication and holiness. The resistance movement to this is graphically portrayed by Satan – the he-goat – and his followers, the little horn, the vile person and the king of the north. The imagery is one of a grand finale between good and evil. Revelation, as we have seen, picks up on these details.

The secular story continues. God's intertwining of earthly events, for which these gods are markers, for prophetic history gives significant reason to have unswerving faith in His Word. **If** the prophetic he-goat is Greece and the single horn its first world leader, Alexander the Great, there must be spiritual symbolic meaning to that ruthless general! Did he ever want to be like God? Did he ever claim to be God or like the ram?

Alexander had conquered the known world. His troops were weary and refused to push beyond India. He had fought, defeated and conquered for eleven years (334-324 B.C.) with a force of men at times exceeding 40,000. The Persian Empire fell at his command. When he visited Troy early in his campaigns, he claimed to be a descendant of Achilles (his hero was Achilles of the Trojan War). His helmsman crowned him with a golden crown. He worshipped at the altar of Zeus.

Early in his military escapades he went to Egypt to visit Siwa, now the city where Ammon-Ra was located (332BC). This wonderful oasis had become a place of pilgrimage since the fifth century B.C. Upon arriving, he was greeted by the temple high priest as the "Son of Ammon."

Then something fascinating occurred! Alexander dressed in a ram's skin and two horns and went into the temple to worship Ammon-Ra. He wanted to be like the "ram god/God." After this he claimed to be the son of Ammon. In 324 B.C. he was in Susa, the former Persian capital, and sent a request to the "League of Corinth" in Greece to be accorded *divine* honors. The decision came, "As Alexander wants to be a god, let him be one."⁵

In 323 B.C. emissaries reached Alexander in the area of Babylon bringing golden crowns. He was crowned king and god, the son of Ammon. He ordered coins (many were struck during and after his life) with his head revealing horns. At banquets he dressed as Ammon, complete with ram's horns. Alexander is an amazing illustration of Satan, who wanted to be like God. The he-goat, therefore, is an apt symbol for Satan, with Alexander as an incredible symbol for what he stands for.

⁵ www.ancientlibrary.com/wcd/Alexander_the_Great,-divinity



What do those four horns which replaced him mean? Three parts of the kingdom were ruled by three of his generals. Seleucus ruled Syria/Asia. Greece, Macedonia and Europe were governed by Cassander; Egypt and Africa by General Ptolemy. Asia Minor (Turkey) became independent. General Lysemicus did not have the power to rule.⁶

Is there an end-time application to this? It's stunning – Satan's host is graphically detailed by John, associating it with the false trinity: the dragon (spiritualism), the beast (papacy) and the false prophet (apostate Protestantism) (Revelation 12, 13, 16:13, 19:20). Those are three "successful" horns.

Those are the three great powers that work together in the final apostate moves to thwart holiness and the redemption of man. What about that fourth horn? There is a separate power that wars against the false trinity at the end but never controls or succeeds. In Daniel 11 the king of the north is specifically the end-time antichrist (papacy) but generally functions like Babylon, (as outlined in Jeremiah 50, 51 and the book of Revelation), that false trinity. What power fights these three end-time powers? Islam! That is the king of the south in Daniel 11, represented by Turkey, which had become independent. That power creates tension that reaches serious confrontations right at the end. But – it is defeated and comes to an end.

The ram represents Jesus – the "Ram of God." It was represented by Medo-Persia with Cyrus the "deliverer." That was a symbolic prophecy made one hundred years before he entered the scene. The he-goat is Satan. Here is opened to the student of prophecy scenes of earth's last conflict 2500 years before deliverance finally comes.

Bocklin's Pan, the most famous painting of the Greek god



⁶ <http://www.stormfront.org/whitehistory/hwr11.htm>