

The Antichrist “Little Horn”

(A Daniel 8 Study – Part 2)

Introduction

There are many symbols for the antichrist in the Old and New Testaments. They all portray a deceptive earthly power that is contrary to divine purposes. This apostate “force” wears a “Christian shroud.” But it is a façade that hides irreverent beliefs in God’s Word.

Daniel illustrates this “man”–“agency” twice as a “*little horn*” (Daniel 7 and 8), then as a “*king*” (8:23), a “*vile person*” (11:21) and, finally, the “*king of the north*” 11:15, 40).

- It is vital to understand this prophetic issue, since John’s Revelation notes (under different symbols) the whole world will be enamored by its enchantments: “*All the world wondered after the beast [antichrist]*” (Revelation 13:3).
- “*With whom [harlot antichrist] the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication*” (Revelation 17:2).

This narrative will focus on Daniel 8 – but will reference other accounts.

In the October 2019 edition of *EndTime Issues* the incredible war between Christ (the Ram) and Satan (the rough he-goat) was discussed. Its historical story (Medo-Persia and Greece) became metaphors for the end-of-time resistance of Satan with the antichrist against Christ and His followers. The great horn (Alexander the Great) was broken – but not until he claimed divine attributes; he then became a symbol of the last-day antichrist.

- Daniel is first focused on that great horn.
- Then he sees a “*little horn*” that becomes *great* – the end-time metaphor of that great Grecian horn, representing the antichrist.

The end-of-time “*little horn*” story then began:

“And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land” (Daniel 8:9).

A literal translation from Hebrew: “*And from one of them moves forth a horn from little beginnings, and it became exceedingly great toward the south and toward the east and toward the glory.*”¹

¹ *Symposium on Daniel*, Frank B. Holbrook, Editor (Review and Herald Publishing Association, Maryland, 1986). Gerhard F. Hasel, [DARCOM] “The ‘Little Horn,’ the Heavenly Sanctuary, and the Time of the End: A study of Daniel 8:9-14, chapter vi, p. 386.

“And out of one of them” (vs 9)

The word for “one” is feminine, for “them” is masculine and for “wind” (in the previous verse) can be feminine or masculine. This has created many scholarly debates. What does the little horn arise from? The work of Shea² and the discussed by Hasel³ reveal, without any compromise to the Hebrew grammar, that this little horn comes from one of the four winds of heaven.⁴ This is an ancient way of describing the four directions of the compass.

“a little horn,” (vs 9)

The weight of evidence from many Hebrew studies suggests that the “little horn” should be introduced as: “a single horn that began small.”⁵ The completed phrase is interesting:

“came forth a little horn,” (vs 9)

- Yasa (came forth) suggests that it moves from one point to another in a well-organized, military-like precision.
- It already existed but now is moving from point A to point B ***in power!***

The “little horn” imagery has now been noted three times in Daniel:

Daniel 7:8

Little horn came up among ten horns

Came up from the head of the fourth beast

It had eyes of a man and mouth, speaking “great” things (blasphemy)

Daniel 7:24-25

Little horn rises among ten horns

Came up out of the beast

It speaks great words against the Most High, and changes time and laws (of God).

Persecutes saints

Daniel 8:9–12

Little horn came forth

Came out of the north wind

Magnified himself against Christ.

Cast some of God’s people and leaders to the ground (persecution)

Historical

The weight of contextual evidence suggests that these two narratives represent an end-time rendition of the little horn.

² Shea, W. H.; *Daniel and the Judgment* (Washington D.C., Maryland; 1980), p. 66. Hasel, Gerhard F.; *DARCOM-D*, p. 404; BDB, p. 391.

³ *Symposium on Daniel*, Frank B. Holbrook, Editor (Review and Herald Publishing Association, Maryland, 1986), Gerhard F. Hasel, “The ‘Little Horn,’ the Heavenly Sanctuary, and the Time of the End: A study of Daniel 8:9-14, chapter vi, pp. 389-390

⁴ Doukhan, Jacques B.; *Daniel* (Andrews University Press, Southerland House, Berrien Springs, MI 49104-1700; 1987), p. 28.

⁵ Steinmann, *op. cit.*, p. 395.

From the historical account of Daniel 7:8, following the sequence of those four beast nations, this little horn can be shown through those power successions to be Papal Rome.⁶

“which waxed exceeding great,” (vs 9)

Miller⁷ uses the word “insignificant” for “small” at its start, revealing that the beginnings would be hardly noticeable.

- Many scholars suggest that it grew in size (“very exceedingly”), but the context is of strength, influence and power.⁸
- The ram “*became great*” (vs 4), the he-goat “*waxed very great*” (vs 8); now, the little horn becomes great in power (repeated in vs 11).
- Waxed “*great*” is *gadal* and is used in all three places. Literally: “And he made himself great”⁹ in importance.¹⁰
- As with the ram and he-goat (Part 1 of this study, October 2019), God points out the direction it moves!

“toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land” (vs 9)

Contextually, coming out of the “north” represents a flagrant defiance of God. That direction is where God’s throne resides (Psalm 48:2)!

Excursus:

God’s throne is depicted in the “*side of the north*” (Psalm 48:2; cf. Job 37:22). Satan anticipated that he would “*exalt my throne*” above the stars to “*the sides of the north,*” that he would “*be like the most High*” (Isaiah 14:13-14). The little horn, seen as the antichrist, symbolically comes from the north. He wants to be like God!

- The enemies of God’s people come from the north (Jeremiah 1:14-15, Ezekiel 38:6).
- The “*king of the north*” symbolizes the antichrist (Daniel 11:21-45; cf. Zephaniah 2:12), wanting to be like God!
- The fourth seal, associated with the tribe of Dan, was located *north* of the tabernacle. That tribe represents the end-time antichrist and his followers (Revelation 4:7, 6:7-8).

⁶ Fowler, Franklin S., Jr.; “*Time of the End*” within *Daniel 7* (Christian Heritage Foundation, 2014), pp. 12-16 and Appendix VII, p. 139.

⁷ Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

⁸ Steinmann, *op. cit.*, p. 395.

⁹ *DARCOM-D*, p. 402.

¹⁰ Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon* (unabridged).

The “insignificant” horn is quickly seen as a major power with its base, origins, in the north. Its “expansion” is again illustrated by the verb *yasa*. – “to go, move, come forth.” This is in the *qal* present tense, meaning actively moving forward.¹¹ Described later in greater detail, it says that “*He will cause deceit to prosper*” (Daniel 8:25a – NIV). This horn power is evil.

Daniel calls Palestine “*the pleasant*” or “*beautiful land*” (also later in 11:16, 41; cf. 11:45). That was his home. He likely never saw it nor his parents again. Ezekiel, an older contemporary prophet in exile, also used special words, quoting God (Ezekiel 20:6, 15) to describe this area (cf. Jeremiah 3:19, Zechariah 7:14, Psalm 106:24, Malachi 3:12)! Daniel was to the west, in Babylon, so the pleasant land would be east.

- This “power” is coming from the north toward the east, west and south.

How do we especially know that this “little horn” is a prophecy of **end-time** in our Christian era?

- It is at the *es qes* – the end of time (8:17, 19) (clarified in Daniel 11 and 12).
- It comes to its end “without hand” (8:25) – no military conquest (cf. 11:45, 12:1) (when God takes final control).
- It comes when the **tarrying time** ends (tied to Habakkuk 2:2-3) (Hebrews 10:36-37).
- It arises when sin reaches its peak (Daniel 8:23).
- It relates to the time of God’s wrath or indignation (Daniel 8:19) – *zaam* in Hebrew (cf. Revelation 15:7-16).
- The glorious land is noted in context (Daniel 8:9 – a pivotal end-time focus) (cf. Daniel 11:45).
- It is written in Hebrew, suggesting that it is specifically for God’s people (Daniel 2–7 is Aramaic).
- It is in the era when Jesus is called “Prince of Host” – important! He has a people (8:11, 25; cf. Daniel 7:13-14, Malachi 3:17).
- The advent of this little horn comes *far after* the ancient kingdoms of Medo-Persia and Greece (8:23). “Far after” has eschatological tones.”¹² (NIV: “distant future”)

Daniel now reveals what this antichrist little horn’s mission really is.

Little Horn Defies God

Over the next several verses of Daniel 8 we find several things the *little horn does as it lashes out against God and His people*.

¹¹ Hasel, *op. cit.*, p. 395.

¹² Doukhan, *op. cit.*, pp. 28, 126.

“And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them” (Daniel 8:10).

The little horn exalts itself through symbolic “warfare” – here, spiritual.¹³

“And it waxed great,” (vs 10)

The successful “ideological conquest” that the little horn makes throughout the world, leading to its greatness (*gadal* – H), is repeated here. This time its power and arrogance take on a new dimension.

- Up to this point that power and influence have been **horizontal**, tied to planet earth.
 - The language portrays an organized *military-like* success¹⁴ in its global reach.
 - Evidence suggests that this antichrist has already become a world power (e.g. the sea beast of Revelation 13 and the harlot on the beast in Revelation 17). “*Power that was given him over all kindreds and tongues and nations*” (13:7).
- Now this directional force changes to the **vertical**, defying heaven!

What world power is so strong that it feels so confident and arrogant that it challenges God and His people? There is only one that is intimately tied to the satanic he-goat.

The antichrist prophecy in Revelation 17 gives amazing additional clues as to who this antichrist is:

1. Revelation 17:1 states that the harlot woman (apostate antichrist church) has major control of the world (sitting on waters, explained in verse 15).
2. In Revelation 17:3, the woman is then seen sitting [ruling over] on a beast (nation, country or kingdom in prophecy) with ten horns. She is now part of a major **church and state** institution.
3. Revelation 17:9 states that this apostate church (harlot), sits on the seven heads of the beast, which are seven mountains or hills.

Instantly, the question emerges: “What church is tied with a state, related to seven hills and has world power?” The Catholic Church with the Vatican City State is located in the city of seven hills – Rome.

“The Roman Church is far-reaching in her plans and modes of operation. She is employing every device to extend her influence and increase her power in preparation for a fierce and determined conflict to regain control of the world, to re-establish persecution, and to undo all that Protestantism has done. Catholicism is gaining ground upon every side. See the increasing number of her churches and chapels in Protestant countries. Look at the popularity of her colleges and seminaries in America, so widely patronized by Protestants. Look at the

¹³ Steinmann, Andrew E.; *Daniel* (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 2008), p. 396.

¹⁴ Hasel, Gerhard F.; *DARCOM-D*, p. 396.

growth of ritualism in England and the frequent defections to the ranks of the Catholics. These things should awaken the anxiety of all.”¹⁵

The late Jesuit Malachi Martin added: “If tomorrow or next week, by a sudden miracle, a **one-world government** were established, the [Catholic] Church would not have to undergo any essential structural change in order to retain its **dominant** position and to **further its global** aims.”¹⁶ That is stunning! This is actually evolving as this is being published.

First, it waxes great throughout the world. Then it reveals aggression against God, His church and His people. Finally, its antagonism goes vertical. The spirit of this antichrist is similar to those rebels who built the tower of Babel. They wanted to reach vertically into the heavens.¹⁷

“even to the host of heaven;” (vs 10)

This is spiritual warfare. “*Host*” (*saba* – H) means “army.”¹⁸ Many expositors see this as angels, celestial beings or heavenly bodies.

Since this tyrant cannot effect a war against the literal angels or actual stars in the sky, this “*host*” (8:10) symbolically refers to **leaders** of God’s people,¹⁹ as explained further in verse 24 and Daniel 11 (cf. Genesis 12:3, 15:5; Exodus 12:41).

The hostility of the antichrist is now graphically painted.

“and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them.” (vs 10)

Like an unexpected storm, the *little horn* imagery turns violent against the “*host*” and “*stars*.” They are cast (*naphal*) fiercely to the earth. If that weren’t enough, the *little horn* stomps (*ramac*) on them. This immediately brings to mind the “*Gentiles*” *treading underfoot* God’s church (Revelation 11:2) and satanic powers *warring* against God’s people (Revelation 12:17; 13:7), all in an end-time setting.

1. God’s people **are** being overcome by this hostile power.
2. This little horn power is later identified as a “*king of fierce countenance*,” who understands dark sentences (deception) and tries to destroy God’s people (8:23-24).
3. This is later detailed by Daniel, where this antichrist even hates God’s holy covenant as it *persecutes* His people (Daniel 11:30-36).
4. Jesus notified Daniel that this king (later called the King of the North) will persecute God’s people for three and a half years (Daniel 12:7). That would bring in the very end

¹⁵ White, Ellen G.; *The Great Controversy*, p. 565-566.

¹⁶ Martin, Malachi; *Keys of This Blood: Pope John Paul II Versus Russia and the West for Control of the New World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991 edn.), p. 143 (emphasis added).

¹⁷ Doukhan, Jacques B.; *Secrets of Daniel* (The Review and Herald Publishing Association; Hagerstown, MD 21740; 2000).

¹⁸ Miller, Stephen R.; *The New American Commentary*, vol. 18 (Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), p. 227.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

of time, when Michael stands up, the great tribulation comes and the deliverance of God's people occurs (Daniel 12:1).

5. John also records this persecution as "*stomping*" (11:2, 12:17, 13:7).

Gabriel later describes this as he "*shall destroy wonderfully ... and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people*" (8:24).

- Elevation of this horn power to the "*stars*" reveals the attempts of Satan to take control of God's people.
- This is a move repeatedly discussed in prophecy, as it divulges his intent to assume the prerogatives of God. Once he has some power over them, he harms them. The he-goat's agent is this little horn.²⁰

Now he takes on Jesus Himself! Note specifically what the papacy harms – two things that only belong to God!

"Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily [sacrifice] was taken away, and the place [makon] of his sanctuary [miqdash] was cast down (Daniel 8:11).

"Yea, he magnified himself" (vs 11)

The NIV states: "It set itself up to be as great as the Prince."

- The use, once again, of the Hebrew word *gadal* implies contextually his arrogant move to "*be like God*" (cf. Isaiah 14:14).
- There is an echo from Daniel 7, where the little horn blasphemes God (cf. Daniel 7:8, 11, 25). The real intent and spirit of this little horn is now exposed: self elevation through defiance of the divine!

A "replay" of this amazing exaltation by a man subsequently identified as a "king" is in Daniel 11:36: "*And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done*" (cf. 8:23).

²⁰ Doukhan, Jacques B.; *Secrets of Daniel* (The Review and Herald Publishing Association; Hagerstown, MD 21740; 2000), p. 124.

- John the revelator identifies an antichrist beast that comes out of the sea, representing the papacy, in a similar end-time setting: “*And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven*” (Revelation 13:6).

“The leader of the Catholic church is defined ... as the Vicar of Jesus Christ (and is accepted as such by believers). The Pope is considered the man on earth who **TAKES THE PLACE** of the Second Person of the omnipotent God of the Trinity.”²²

The priest inductees in this picture are bowing/lying prostrate before the Pope, pledging themselves to be loyal to him and the Church – a complete submission due only to God.



Bowing in utter submission to the pope

“even to the prince of the host,” (vs 11:b); “he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; (vs 25b)

- In the previous verse this horn power was self-directed against God’s holy people, symbolized as a host in the sky, as the stars.
- They have been identified as a distinct part of God’s people – perhaps already “sealed” (Revelation 7:4).

“by him the daily [sacrifice] was taken away” (vs 11b)

- The antecedent to the pronoun “him” is the “Prince of host.” The late Gerhard F. Hasel notes that this should say: “from him.”²³
- The word “sacrifice” was supplied (unfortunately, even in the Septuagint).²⁴ In the KJV and NKJV it is printed in italics, meaning that it is a supplied word.

The phrase “taken away” is from *huraym* (H). Many rely on its root word *rum* (H) to interpret what happens to the “daily,” thus claiming that it simply means the “daily” is “lifted up.” However, there are specific reasons that it means “lifted up and taken away.”

1. The translators of the NIV word it correctly: “took away.” Similarly, in the NET Bible it was “removed.” Detailed references as to why this is correct are noted by Hasel.²⁵
2. Daniel 8, 11 (vss 30-45) and 12 are linked together in a unique message. In 11:31 and 12:11 the “daily” is taken away. There, the Hebrew word “sur” is used, specifically meaning “removed” or “taken away.” In all three instances this is contrasted with a

²¹ <http://www.end-times-prophecy.org/man-of-sin-revealed.html>

²² Pope John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, p. 3, 1994.

²³ Hasel, *op. cit.*, p. 404; BDB, p. 556.

²⁴ White, Ellen G.; *Early Writings*, p. 74.

²⁵ Hasel, *op. cit.*, p. 404, reference 22.

“*transgression*” or “*abomination*” that is “committed” or legally “*set up*.” Something is “*taken away*,” something is put in its place.

In a later discussion (vss 12 and 13) that transgression or sin is rebellion against God’s *authority, law and covenant*.

What one thing in both the Old and the New Testaments represents God’s *authority, law and covenant*? (cf. Exodus 31:13-17, 20;8-11).

- “*Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel*” (Exodus 19:5-6).
- “*And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments*” (Exodus 34:28c).

“and the place of his sanctuary was cast down.” (vs 11)

First, we saw arrogant actions against God by harming His people; now the antichrist attempts to destroy two important things *directly related* to Him (Messiah the Prince):

1. The “*daily*”
2. The “*place of his sanctuary*”

We can assume that these two things must be very important to God and threaten the papacy so much that it must get rid of them!

He persecutes and now takes away those two very special things that belong only to God.

- “*Place*” is the subject of the sentence, not “*sanctuary*.”
- The sanctuary (*miqdas* – H) metaphorically represents what “has been devoted to the worship of God,”²⁶ His sanctuary, His church. Its **function**, purpose or mission has been destroyed.

Thus, the exaltation of the antichrist, assuming prerogatives of God, mocks even the exalted throne of God – His dwelling place of holiness!

What does the *little horn* do to take away or remove the heavenly presence from the tabernacle? Daniel 7:25 already said that it changes “*times and laws*.”

There is an astonishing parallel in II Thessalonians 2. Just before Jesus comes, the “**man of sin will be revealed**” (*apokalupto* – unveiled to the world). Paul says, “*Let no man deceive you*” (vs 3). What does it say about that man of sin?

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 789.

- He opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God.
- He is as God.
- He functions as if he is sitting in the *temple* of God.
- He has deceivableness of unrighteousness.
- His followers don't receive the love of truth.
- Then he and the wicked will be revealed.
- The mystery of iniquity will be taken out of the way.
- Then Jesus comes.

This *little horn* is the end-time rise of that "*man of sin*."

As this arrogant papal little horn seeks to assume authority that only belongs to Christ, he takes away the fourth commandment (the "*daily*," which reflects God's authority, covenant and law). In turn, that removes the covenant sign of man's restoration (Exodus 31:13-17). The special divine/human link established in Eden is shattered.

"And an host was given him against the daily [sacrifice] by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practiced, and prospered" (Daniel 8:12).

The internal meaning is best described in the NKJV: "*Because of transgression, an army was given over to the horn to oppose the daily [sacrifices]; and he cast truth down to the ground. He did all this and prospered.*"

"And an host was given him" (vs 12) [an army was given over to the little horn]

The word for "*host*" is "*saba* (H) and refers to:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armies fighting • Regimentation • Loyalists | } | <p>These became ardent supporters of the little horn, who then fulfills its directives. ²⁷</p> |
|---|---|---|

The Hebrew word for "*given him*" is *tinnaten*. When it is followed by a preposition, as it is here, it means "to bring something against."²⁸

The "*host*," therefore, describes a group of people that opposes the "*daily*," which belongs to the "*Prince of the host*," noted in the previous verse.

The question then arises: How does this happen?

"by reason of transgression" (vs 12) [because of transgression]

²⁷ *Theological Word Dictionary of the Old Testament* (Eerdmans., 1977–2012.), p. 1865a.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 417.

“The transgression here must be identified with the ‘desolating transgression’ of verse 13.”²⁹ This refers to a sin of the little horn. Though this is a problem text to translate, it suggests:

This transgression (*be-pesha* – H)³⁰ is a very important concept to contextually understand.

- It is the first sin that Gabriel advises God’s people to give up to bring in everlasting righteousness (Daniel 9:24).
- It relates to rejecting allegiance to God (Isaiah 1:28, 48:8; Ezekiel 2:3; Hosea 8:1).
- It suggests acting independent of God (Amos 4:4).
- It assumes that the individual/group indulging in it refuses any correction (Jeremiah 2:8, 29; Hosea 7:13; Zephaniah 3:1).

These can be again summarized as a revolt against God’s authority, His covenant and His laws.³¹

This, then, relates to:

“and it cast down the truth to the ground;” (vs 12) [and he cast truth to the ground]

Truth is made of no significance – literally, “trampled on.”³² The word for “truth” is *emeth* (H). Daniel uses it elsewhere for: (1) revelation that comes from God and its reliability for future fulfillment (8:26; 10:1, 21; 11:2) and (2) what was written in the law (9:13a; Psalm 43:3, 119:43). ***This word relates to something requiring obedience to God.*** Therefore, its great implication here is His law.

The ancient Jewish expositors Ibn Ezra, Rashi and Metudath David interpreted this phrase as: “The little horn shall annul the law and the observance of the commandments” (cf. Malachi 2:6, Romans 2:20).³³

- This was, again, seen in Daniel 7, where the little horn stood in opposition to God – and
- Intended to change “*times and laws*” (7:25).

“and it practiced, and prospered” (vs 12)

“It will succeed in doing this”³⁴ (stomping on truth). The antichrist with its “*host*” following him, defy Christ and nullify truth. But God eventually brings it to a final, permanent end (8:25).

Summary Thought

²⁹ Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 335.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 741, 1846a.

³¹ Harris, *op. cit.*, p. 741.

³² Doukhan, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Steinmann, *op. cit.*, p. 397.

Daniel's last-day **vision** experience has been presented in Parts 1 and 2 of this study. The rest of the book represents three different time-progressive explanations that will come to help Daniel and his readers. A segment of prophecy in Daniel 12 was to remain sealed until the "*time of the end.*" Since that prophetic end (Daniel 12:4, 9) has now begun, many expositors fully understand those amazing time-period prophecies.

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