

Daniel's Vision of the Ram, the Goat, and the Little Horn



DANIEL 8:1-27

TEXT, EXPOSITION AND PRACTICAL HELPS

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DIVISION III

The History and Destiny of Israel: Five Prophecies or Pictures Clearly Seen in Daniel's Visions, [Daniel 8:1–12:13](#)

Daniel's Vision of the Ram, the Goat, and the Little Horn: A Prophecy of the Greeks' Conquest of Medo-Persia and of the Horrible Persecution by Antiochus Epiphanes, [Daniel 8:1-27](#)

[\(Daniel 8:1-27\)](#) **Introduction:** within the annals of world history, the Jewish people are one of the most fascinating nationalities on the face of the earth. Among all races, they have survived unbelievable atrocities—holocaust after holocaust—with one tyrant after another attempting to exterminate them.

The tiny nation of Israel has been invaded time and again, conquered, and the survivors repeatedly exiled all over the world. Yet the Jews as a people and nation have survived. How? By the supernatural power of God. Centuries ago, God chose Abraham and his descendants to be the people through whom He would send both His Holy Word and the promised Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, into the world. As God's Holy Word says, "**Salvation is of [comes from] the Jews**" ([John 4:22](#)).

Although many of the Jews have failed to follow the LORD down through the centuries, some have been genuine in their faith, believing and trusting God's Holy Word. Because of the true believers, the LORD has always miraculously saved the Jewish people from extinction...and He always will. All because of His wonderful promise to Abraham and his descendants.

In the days of Daniel, Judah and its beloved capital Jerusalem had been completely destroyed, and the Jews were now living as exiles in Babylon. They had lost everything: their homes, wealth, property, worship centers, communities, cities, nation, and Solomon's temple.

In addition, most of the men—their husbands, fathers, and sons—had been slaughtered in the war with Babylon. The survivors, the exiles in Babylon, were gripped by a spirit of hopelessness. They could see only a dark future of continued oppression and suffering under Babylon's heels. **What did the future hold for them? Would they survive as a nation?**

The Jews, in particular the true believers among them, needed a word of encouragement, a message of assurance from God. Thus the LORD spoke and gave Daniel a vision of the future, especially the future that concerned His own people.

In fact, the visions and prophecies of **chapters 8-12**, the remainder of Daniel's great book, focus on the Jewish people. For this reason, Daniel wrote the remainder of his book in Hebrew not Aramaic.

Remember that the sections of the book that deal with the Gentile nations are written in Aramaic ([Daniel 2:5-7:28](#)) and the sections focusing primarily upon the Jews are written in Hebrew ([Daniel 1:1-2:4](#); [Daniel 8:1-12:13](#)).

This is, Daniel's Vision of the Ram, the Goat, and the Little Horn: A Prophecy of the Greeks' Conquest of Medo-Persia and of the Horrible Persecution by Antiochus Epiphanes, [Daniel 8:1-27](#).

1. **The vision: a picture of rulers in the end time denying the LORD and trampling people underfoot (vv.1-14).**
2. **The explanation of the vision: concerned the end time (v.17) and the time of wrath (v.19) (vv.15-27).**

1. ([Daniel 8:1-14](#)) Denial of God, Example of, World Rulers; Antiochus Epiphanes—World Empires, Prophecy Concerning, Medo-Persia; Greece; Alexander the Great—Prophecy, About Antiochus Epiphanes—Little Horn, Represented, Antiochus Epiphanes—Antiochus Epiphanes, Type of, Antichrist—Alexander the Great, Prophecy About—Greece, Prophecy About—Persecution, of Jewish Believers, by Antiochus Epiphanes.

The vision that God gave Daniel is a clear picture of rulers denying the LORD and trampling people, both believers and unbelievers, underfoot. Down through history, many rulers have been tyrants driven by a fierce craving for more power or territory. In some instances, the rulers have been filled with prejudice, a bitter hatred against a particular race or nation. As the reader studies this vision of Daniel, he or she needs to picture the horrors of war with the catastrophic injuries and death inflicted upon warriors as well as the cruel oppression, subjection, and suffering of the survivors. These are the very focus of Daniel's vision, in particular pertaining to God's people.

Note the Scripture and outline:

a. Daniel received the vision in the third year of Belshazzar's reign, which was probably **550 B.C.** This was about 12 years before the fall of Babylon on **October 12, 539 B.C.** In his vision, Daniel saw himself at the fortress of Susa or Shushan standing by the Ulai River, a canal that had been built to provide water for the fortress city. Susa was about 200 miles east of Babylon and 150 miles north of the Persian Gulf. Although the city was the capital of Elam, it was not that important to Babylon. However, later it would become one of the royal cities of the Persian Empire ([Nehemiah 1:1](#); [Esther 1:2](#)). The **Persian king Darius I** established Susa as his capital in **521 B.C.** From a Biblical perspective, two of the prominent citizens of Susa were **Esther** and **Nehemiah**.

b. In his vision, Daniel saw a large, powerful ram, which represented Medo-Persia ([Daniel 8:3-4, 20](#)).

He noticed **two significant features** about the ram.

First, the ram had two long horns; however, one horn was longer than the other even though it started to grow later than the first. This refers to the fact that Persia was initially less powerful than Media, but under the leadership of Cyrus, Persia eventually conquered Media and united the two nations to become the great Medo-Persian Empire.

Second, the ram was unstoppable as it charged west, north, and south ([Daniel 8:4](#)). In its terrorizing charge west, the *ferocious* ram conquered Babylon, Syria, and Asia-Minor. It even invaded certain areas of Greece. To the north, Persia (**the ram**) conquered Armenia, Scythia, and the Caspian Sea area. Moving southward, Cyrus and his successors conquered Egypt and Ethiopia. No nation was able to withstand the powerful and cruel attack of Medo-Persia. This terrifying beast did as it pleased and became the largest empire up until that time in human history.

c. Suddenly, Daniel saw in his vision a swift, angry goat with one very prominent and large horn. This angry goat represented Greece and Alexander the Great ([Daniel 8:5-8](#)).

Daniel described **five features** of the goat.

First, the goat (Alexander the Great) came from the west, swiftly crossing the entire earth without even touching the ground ([Daniel 8:5^b](#)).

Second, the goat was filled with rage as he attacked the two-horned ram (**Medo-Persia**) ([Daniel 8:6](#)). Within two years of succeeding his father as king (**336 B.C.**), Alexander launched his fierce attack against the Persian Empire. Apparently, Alexander's rage against the Persians came about because of the raids the Persians had formerly made into Greece.

Third, the angry goat attacked the ram with intense power ([Daniel 8:7](#)). When the goat struck the ram that had two horns, it represented Alexander's destroying both Media and Persia, trampling the empire into the ground. Medo-Persia was completely helpless before the raging Alexander the Great. And no other power on earth could save the Persian Empire from the mighty power of the young Greek conqueror.

Fourth, Greece became a great empire under Alexander the Great, conquering most of the known world of that day. But due to his success, he became increasingly prideful and arrogant, even exalting himself as a god. He either pretended to be or actually thought himself to be a god, for he required the soldiers in various districts of his empire to bow and

worship him as a god. Worshipping rulers was a custom in some of the oriental nations he conquered, but the great battalions of his own troops rebelled against this policy.

Fifth, At the height of Grecian power, the large horn of the goat was broken off. Alexander the Great died due to a sudden fever at the age of **33 (June 13, 323 B.C.)**. After his death, various leaders of Greece made attempts to hold the empire together. But the attempts were unsuccessful.

As Scripture says, the large horn of the goat was **replaced by four prominent horns**.

This simply means that four prominent military commanders divided the empire among themselves (see [Daniel 7:1-14](#), esp.pt.5, v.6 for more discussion):

1. Antipater and Cassander ruled Greece and Macedonia
2. Lysimachus ruled Thrace and Asia-Minor
3. Seleucus I Nicator ruled Syria, Babylon, and much of the Middle East
4. Ptolemy I Soter ruled Egypt and Palestine

Note an important fact: God used both Greece and Rome to prepare the way for the coming of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, into the world. As Alexander conquered nation after nation, he was able to spread the culture and language of Greece throughout the world. The common Grecian language, known as **Konie Greek**, is the language of the New Testament.

After the fall of Greece, the Roman Empire ruled the world with an iron fist, helping to enforce peace and freedom of travel as well as openness to other cultures, ideas, philosophies, and religions. As Scripture says, the LORD was preparing the world for the *fullness of time*, the day when He would send His Son into the world ([Galatians 4:4-5](#)). When Jesus Christ came, it was far easier to carry the message of the gospel to the world due to the common language of Greek, the peace and freedom of travel, and the sharing of ideas enforced by Rome.

d. In his vision, Daniel saw a *little horn* arise from one of the horns or divisions of the Grecian Empire ([Daniel 8:9-12](#)). This *little horn* was Antiochus Epiphanes, who ruled Syria from **175–163 B.C.** Antiochus Epiphanes was one of the most despicable, savage leaders in history. In fact, Daniel saw the terrifying evil and suffering that this tyrant would inflict upon so many people, in particular upon those who truly trusted the LORD.

Daniel described **shocking details about** Antiochus Epiphanes.

1) Antiochus Epiphanes grew in power through military conquest ([Daniel 8:9](#)). Although he had a small, insignificant beginning, he became a powerful force through aggression and the domination of conquered nations. In the south, Antiochus invaded Egypt; and in the east, Parthia, Persia, Armenia, and Palestine, referred to as the *Beautiful* or *glorious* or *pleasant Land*. Of course, Daniel calls the land of Israel *beautiful* because

it was his homeland as well as the land God promised to Abraham and his descendants who truly followed the LORD. As is seen throughout these points, Antiochus Epiphanes despised the land of Israel and the Jews.

2) Antiochus Epiphanes persecuted the Jews, in particular those who were true believers and followers of the LORD ([Daniel 8:10](#)). Note how believers are poetically described as “**the host of heaven.**” The phrase “**starry hosts**” probably refers to the leaders among believers. Although Antiochus persecuted all the Jews, the concern of Scripture here is for the host of heaven and for the stars that shine so brightly in heaven, the people who truly trust and follow the LORD. Scripture actually says that Antiochus *trampled* on the Jews, indicating that the persecution was ruthless, bloody, and devastating.

Over the years the evil tyrant slaughtered thousands of Jews. In 169 B.C. he launched an attack against Egypt, but his army was forced back by the Roman commander Popilius Laenas. As a result of his humiliation, Antiochus vented his anger on the Jews by sending 20,000 troops to seize Jerusalem. Most of the Jewish men were slaughtered by Assyrian troops, and the women and children were taken as slaves. Those who did escape joined the forces of the patriot Judas Maccabeus.

3) Antiochus Epiphanes exalted himself to be equal with God ([Daniel 8:11](#)). He chose the name *Epiphanes* because it means *illustrious, manifestation*. In doing so, he was claiming to be an *illustrious manifestation* of the gods he worshipped. He even had his image and the word **theos** (god) impressed on the coins that were minted during the years of his rule. He essentially claimed to be as great as the Prince of the host, which is a reference to the LORD Himself.

In launching his campaign against the Jews, he sought to abolish their religion.....

1. by suppressing their worship of the LORD
2. by plundering the temple of its sacred furniture, articles, and treasure
3. by forbidding them to practice their religious rituals and ceremonies
4. by forbidding them to be circumcised
5. by requiring them to worship the false Greek gods
6. by demanding that they give their first allegiance to him
7. by desecrating the sanctuary of the temple by building an altar to Zeus and sacrificing a pig on it, an act that was to become known as the “abomination of desolation” or “the abomination that makes desolate” ([Daniel 8:13](#); [Daniel 9:27](#); [Daniel 11:31](#); [Daniel 12:11](#); [Matthew 24:15](#); [Mark 13:14](#))

4) Antiochus Epiphanes oppressed the Jewish people as allowed by God because of their horrible rebellion and sins ([Daniel 8:12](#)). The LORD was using Antiochus to discipline his sinful people. Many of them had turned away from him and were worshipping the false gods of Greece. This fact and the history of Antiochus Epiphanes can be found in the books of *First* and *Second Maccabees* of the *Douy* or **Roman Catholic version of the Bible**. Because the people had *given themselves over* to the so-called Greek gods, the LORD *gave them over* to the Greek tyrant Antiochus Epiphanes. This Greek tyrant was determined to turn Israel into a Greek society and culture.

5) Antiochus Epiphanes suppressed the truth; indeed, he tried to get rid of God's law, His Holy Word ([Daniel 8:12^b](#)). Scripture says that he literally threw truth to the ground, attempting to stamp the truth of the Jewish Scriptures into the ground. He *actually* had the Law of Moses, the books of the Old Testament that were in existence at that time, torn to pieces and burned up. No doubt, he knew that the Holy Scriptures were the foundation of the people's beliefs. Therefore, if he had any hope of converting the Jews to Greek culture, he knew that he must completely eliminate the Scriptures, God's Holy Word.

e. Daniel suddenly saw in the vision two heavenly beings ([Daniel 8:13-14](#)). One of the beings or angels asked the other how long the oppression of the *little horn* would last. How long could the people expect the desecration of the temple and their persecution to continue? As long as the desecration and persecution continued, there would be no daily sacrifice within the temple. Furthermore, the false worship within the temple—the abomination that causes desolation—would continue to defile the holy worship center dedicated to the LORD. Of course, this question was being asked for Daniel's benefit, so he could record it for the benefit and encouragement of future generations of believers. But for the Jews in particular who would be suffering persecution under Antiochus or, for that matter, under any tyrant, this prophecy would clearly show that the LORD puts restrictions upon all tyrants and their persecution of His people.

In response, the other angel immediately answered that the duration of the persecution would be 2300 evenings and mornings ([Daniel 8:14](#)). This either means 2300 twenty-four hour days (about 6½ years) or 1150 evenings and 1150 mornings (3 years and 55 days).

Excellent commentators hold both positions; and since Scripture is unclear as to which interpretation is correct, it is impossible to make a final determination. Both positions fit in perfectly with the prophecy, *and neither violates the Word of God*. Those who hold to a total of 1150 days usually begin with December 167 B.C., when Antiochus set up the altar of Zeus in the temple, and end when Judas Maccabeus rededicated the temple on **December 14, 164 B.C.** Those who hold to the position of 2300 days usually **begin** with the removal of the High Priest from his official position in **171 B.C.** and **end** with the rededication of the temple in **164 B.C.**

Thought 1. True believers will be persecuted. Any person who seeks to obey God’s commandments—to live righteously and godly—will be opposed by the wicked of this earth. The righteous life of the believer exposes the wicked behavior of the unbeliever. Therefore, the wicked will stand against the person who truly seeks to follow the LORD.

Listen to the warning God gives His dear followers:

Matthew 10:16-22 (NASB)

“¹⁶ Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves.

¹⁷ But beware of men, for they will hand you over to *the* courts and scourge you in their synagogues;

¹⁸ and you will even be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.

¹⁹ But when they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you are to say; for it will be given you in that hour what you are to say.

²⁰ For it is not you who speak, but *it is* the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

²¹ Brother will betray brother to death, and a father *his* child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death.

²² You will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved.”

Matthew 24:9 (NASB)

“⁹ Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name.”

Luke 21:12 (NASB)

“¹² But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for My name's sake.”

John 15:20 (NASB)

“²⁰ Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also.”

John 16:2 (NASB)

“² They will make you outcasts from the synagogue, but an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering service to God.”

2 Timothy 3:12 (NASB)

“¹² Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”

Revelation 2:10 (NASB)

“¹⁰ Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.”

2. (Daniel 8:15-27) Antichrist, Symbolized by, Antiochus Epiphanes—Antichrist, Evil Traits and Work of, Sevenfold—Antiochus Epiphanes, Discussed—Daniel, Prophecy of, Antiochus Epiphanes—Vision, of Daniel, the Round, Goat and Little Horn.

The explanation of Daniel’s vision concerned the *end time* and the *time of wrath* ([Daniel 8:17, 19](#)).

Note the Scripture and outline:

a. Suddenly, a majestic person stood before Daniel, a heavenly person who looked like a man ([Daniel 8:15-19](#)). Most likely this striking and imposing person was the Lord Jesus Christ. Whatever the case, the heavenly man called out from the Ulai River, instructing the angel Gabriel to explain the vision to Daniel. As Gabriel approached Daniel, the terrified prophet fell prostrate on the ground ([Daniel 8:17-19](#)). Note that Gabriel addressed Daniel as *son of man*. He was emphasizing the fact that Daniel was merely a man, the son of a human being, a weak creature who could not understand the vision by his own power.

Gabriel informed Daniel that the vision concerned *the time of the end* or *the end time* ([Daniel 8:17](#)). While Gabriel was still speaking, Daniel evidently fainted and fell into a deep sleep. Apparently, the contrast between the holiness of the messenger who stood before him and his own corrupt nature overwhelmed him. Knowing what had happened, Gabriel reached down and touched Daniel and raised him to his feet. Then Gabriel stated that he would explain the vision, for it concerned “*the time of wrath [indignation]*” that would accompany “*the time of the end*” ([Daniel 8:19](#); see [Daniel 8:17, 23](#)).

A question needs to be asked at this point: If Daniel’s vision concerned the Persian and Grecian Empires and Antiochus Epiphanes, how can it take place in *the end time* and *the day of wrath*? After all, these two terms are used throughout Scripture to apply to the end of human history and to the day when God’s wrath will be executed against the wicked of the world ([Jeremiah 30:7](#); [Isaiah 2:11-12](#); [Isaiah 13:6, 9](#); [Joel 2:1-11](#); [Zephaniah 1:1-18](#); [Matthew 24:14](#); see [DEEPER STUDY # 2, the Day of the LORD—Isa. 2:6–4:1](#) see page # 20 for more discussion). In the present context, both the Persian and Grecian Empires came to an end and faced the day of God’s wrath. So did Antiochus Epiphanes. The answer to the question is found in a *double reference*, suggesting that Antiochus Epiphanes is a strong type of the antichrist.

A comparison of the traits of Antiochus Epiphanes with the antichrist clearly shows this (see [DEEPER STUDY # 1— Daniel 8:23-25](#) see page # 15 for more discussion).

b. In a simple but straightforward manner, Gabriel said that the two-horned ram represented the kings of Media and Persia ([Daniel 8:20](#)).

Thus the ram represented the same empire that corresponded to.....

1. the bear in **chapter seven**
2. the chest and arms of King Nebuchadnezzar's statue in **chapter two**

c. The goat represented the king of Greece, and the large horn represented the first king of the Greek Empire ([Daniel 8:21-22](#)). As pointed out above, the four horns represented the four kingdoms that would arise from Alexander the Great's empire. However, none of these four would ever possess as great an empire or power as Alexander.

Keep in mind that the goat represented the same empire that corresponded to.....

1. the winged leopard of **chapter seven**
2. the bronze belly and thighs of Nebuchadnezzar's statue in **chapter two**.

d. The angel explained the very heart of Daniel's vision, that is, the intriguing *little horn* that arises from within the Grecian Empire ([Daniel 8:23-25](#)). This ruler has already been identified as Antiochus Epiphanes, the savage tyrant and archenemy of the Jews. Nine significant traits would characterize Antiochus's rule. Remember that these same evil traits will be true of the antichrist in the end time of human history. To help the reader better understand the similarity of character in Antiochus Epiphanes and the antichrist, we have placed these nine traits in a chart (see [DEEPER STUDY # 1— Daniel 8:23-25](#) see page # 15 for more discussion).

Thought 1: Christ Himself said, “**He who is not with me is against me**” ([Matthew 12:30](#)). Therefore, any person who is not for Christ is anti-Christ. As the beloved Apostle John said, “**...Even now there are many antichrists**” ([1 John 2:18](#)).

In light of this fact, each of us needs to make absolutely certain that we trust Christ and live righteously. We must love our neighbors as ourselves ([Matthew 22:39](#)) and treat others as we want them to treat us ([Matthew 7:12](#); [Luke 6:31](#)). We must guard against the evil behavior so clearly seen in the lives of Antiochus and the coming antichrist. (See [Rev. 13:1-10](#)).

e. God foresaw the course of world history; therefore, the fulfillment of Daniel's vision was assured ([Daniel 8:26](#)). Long before the future events would ever play out, the LORD foresaw the rulers and nations that would arise on the world scene. He saw exactly what the rulers would do, whether good or bad. He also saw how their decisions would affect the course of their nation's history and the impact they would have upon other

nations. Thus the LORD assured Daniel that the vision he had seen would unquestionably come to pass.

But note, Daniel was instructed to seal up the vision; that is, he was to write it on a scroll that could be rolled up and preserved. It was to be safeguarded and made available for all generations to read. This was essential because the prophecies concerned events that were to happen in the distant future, many generations away. Antiochus Epiphanes would not come upon the world scene for almost 400 years after Daniel died. And of course the antichrist that Antiochus symbolized will not come on the world scene until the end time, right before the return of Christ to set up God's kingdom on earth.

Note that Daniel—probably one of the most godly and righteous men to ever live—claimed that God had clearly given him a vision. Furthermore, the predicted events would definitely occur in the *distant future*.

f. The impact of the vision on Daniel was very evident. He was mentally and emotionally drained, so much so that he became physically sick. Indeed, he lay ill for several days, deeply troubled by what he had seen. He had seen a world of conflict, devastation, injury, and death lying out in the future. And tragically, all that lay ahead would be caused by the evil within people's hearts, hearts filled with sinful pride and the selfish craving for more power, wealth, possessions, recognition, and fame.

Daniel saw the broken and despairing hearts as well as the pain and sorrow people would be suffering through the ages to come. And he reacted the same way we would: he was heartbroken, deeply anguished, and completely overcome—to the point of being bedridden for several days.

Thought 1. The *end time* and *time of wrath* are coming. Every one of us will stand face-to-face with God just as Antiochus and the antichrist will. In that day, every one of us will give an account of our behavior, whether good or bad.

- 1) Listen to what Scripture says about the end time, the last days of human history.

Matthew 13:37-43 (NASB)

³⁷ And He said, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man,
³⁸ and the field is the world; and *as for* the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil *one*;
³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels.

⁴⁰ So just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age.

⁴¹ The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness,

⁴² and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁴³ Then The righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.”

Matthew 13:47-50 (NASB)

“⁴⁷ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea, and gathering *fish* of every kind;

⁴⁸ and when it was filled, they drew it up on the beach; and they sat down and gathered the good *fish* into containers, but the bad they threw away.

⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age; the angels will come forth and take out the wicked from among the righteous,

⁵⁰ and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Matthew 24:3-14 (NASB)

“³ As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, Tell us, when will these things happen, and what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”

⁴ And Jesus answered and said to them, "See to it that no one misleads you.

⁵ For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many.

⁶ You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for *those things* must take place, but *that* is not yet the end.

⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes.

⁸ But all these things are *merely* the beginning of birth pangs.

⁹ Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name.

¹⁰ At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another.

¹¹ Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many.

¹² Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold.

¹³ But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.

¹⁴ This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.”

1 Thessalonians 5:1-10 (NASB)

“¹ Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you.

² For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.

³ While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape.

⁴ But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief;

⁵ for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness;

⁶ so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober.

⁷ For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night.

⁸ But since we are of *the* day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.

⁹ For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

¹⁰ who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him.”

Hebrews 9:26-28 (NASB)

“²⁶ Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

²⁷ And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this *comes* judgment,

²⁸ so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without *reference to sin*, to those who eagerly await Him.”

2 Peter 3:10-13 (NASB)

“¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

¹¹ Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,

¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!

¹³ But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.”

2) Listen to what God’s Holy Word says about the coming wrath and indignation of God.

John 3:36 (NASB)

“³⁶ He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

Romans 1:18 (NASB)

“¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.”

Romans 1:29-32 (NASB)

“²⁹ Being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; *they are* gossips,
³⁰ slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,
³¹ without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful;
³² and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.”

Romans 2:8-9 (NASB)

“⁸ But to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.
⁹ *There will be* tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek.”

Ephesians 5:3-6 (NASB)

“³ But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints;
⁴ and *there must be no* filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.
⁵ For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.
⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.”

Hebrews 10:26-27 (NASB)

“²⁶ For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,
²⁷ but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries.”

Psalms 2:12 (NASB)

“¹² Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish *in* the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!”

Jeremiah 10:10 (NASB)

“¹⁰ But the Lord is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King. At His wrath the earth quakes, And the nations cannot endure His indignation.”

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(Daniel 8:23-25) Antiochus Epiphanes, Traits of—Antichrist, Symbolized by, Antiochus Epiphanes—Antichrist, Features of, Ninefold: the nine traits and activities describing Antiochus Epiphanes will also be true of the antichrist.

1. Both Antiochus and the antichrist would arise when sin had reached its height ([Daniel 8:23^b](#)). Wickedness and lawlessness would be running rampant throughout the world, and people would be longing for a leader who could bring peace and order to society. In such a time, both Antiochus and the antichrist would step forth in their particular generations.

Antiochus Epiphanes

Antichrist

“And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up” ([Daniel 8:23](#)).

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition” ([2 Thessalonians 2:3](#))

2. Both Antiochus and the antichrist would be powerful, not by their own ability, but by the power and working of Satan ([Daniel 8:24^a](#)). The power of darkness, Satan himself, would inspire and motivate both leaders, energizing and controlling them for his own purposes.

Antiochus Epiphanes

Antichrist

“And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power” ([Daniel 8:24](#)).

“Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders” ([2 Thessalonians 2:9](#)).

“And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority” ([Revelation 13:2](#))

3. Both Antiochus and the antichrist would cause widespread devastation, succeeding in their evil ambition to conquer and destroy many ([Daniel 8:24^b](#)). In the days of the antichrist, so much devastation will sweep the world that all rational people of earth will be utterly shocked, even the righteous.

Antiochus Epiphanes

Antichrist

“And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice [thrive]” ([Da.8:24](#)).

“And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations” ([Rev. 13:7](#)).

4. Both Antiochus and the antichrist would crush the commanders of military powers and the leaders of nations as well as the people of God ([Daniel 8:24^c](#)). In fact, both tyrants would seek to exterminate those who truly trust and follow the LORD.

Antiochus Epiphanes

Antichrist

*“I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them” ([Daniel 7:21](#)).
“And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time” ([Daniel 7:25](#)).*

“[He] shall destroy the mighty and the holy people” ([Daniel 8:24^c](#)).

“And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations” ([Revelation 13:7](#)).

“And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed” ([Revelation 13:15](#)).

5. Both Antiochus and the antichrist would use deceit to achieve their goals ([Daniel 8:25^a](#)). Both would be “masters of intrigue” (NIV, [Daniel 8:23](#)) and deception.

Antiochus Epiphanes

Antichrist

“For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God. Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe: As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory” ([1 Thessalonians 2:9-12](#)).

“And through his policy also he shall cause craft [deception, intrigue] to prosper in his hand;” ([Daniel 8:25^a](#))

*“And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?” ([Revelation 13:4](#)).
“And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live” ([Revelation 13:14](#)).*

“And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone” ([Revelation 19:20](#)).

6. Both Antiochus and the antichrist would consider themselves superior and exalt themselves above all others ([Daniel 8:25^b](#)). A deep sense of pride and arrogance would flood their hearts, and they would continually magnify themselves, seeking the recognition and honor of others.

Antiochus Epiphanes

Antichrist

“I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things” ([Daniel 7:8](#)).

“I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame” ([Daniel 7:11](#)).

“And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows” ([Daniel 7:20](#)).

“And he shall magnify himself in his heart” ([Daniel 8:25^b](#))

“And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time” ([Daniel 7:25](#)).

“Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God” ([2 Thessalonians 2:4](#)).

“And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months” ([Revelation 13:5](#)).

7. Both Antiochus and the antichrist would attack and destroy people when they were living in peace and feeling secure ([Daniel 8:25^c](#)). The evil tyrants would deceive the people by promising to bring peace and order to society. The people would be lulled into a sense of false security; then, suddenly, the evil tyrants would attack and slaughter many of them.

Antiochus Epiphanes

“And [he] by peace shall destroy many” ([Daniel 8:25^c](#))

Antichrist

“For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape” ([1 Thessalonians 5:3](#)).

“And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon” ([Revelation 16:12-16](#)).

8. Both Antiochus and the antichrist would oppose the LORD, continually cursing and blaspheming His name ([Daniel 8:25^d](#)). The Prince of princes may refer to God Himself or to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, who will be violently opposed by the antichrist in the last days of human history. Or, perhaps, the term refers to both God and Christ. Whatever the case, the two tyrants, Antiochus and the antichrist, would curse and blaspheme the Name of the LORD. They would seek to establish the state as the object of the world’s worship, that to which people must give their first loyalty.

Antiochus Epiphanes

“He shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand” ([Daniel 8:25^d](#))

Antichrist

“And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time” ([Daniel 7:25](#)).

“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” ([Daniel 11:36](#)).

“Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God” ([2 Thessalonians 2:4](#)).

“And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven” ([Revelation 13:5-6](#)).

9. Both Antiochus and the antichrist would be destroyed by the intervention and power of God Himself ([Daniel 8:25^e](#)). Antiochus did not die in battle or by the hands of men but rather from an illness that struck his body. Obviously, the LORD brought about his death. In the case of the antichrist, he will be struck dead by the direct intervention of the Lord Jesus Christ, who will strike him down with the blinding glory of His holiness.

Antiochus Epiphanes

Antichrist

“And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming” ([2 Thessalonians 2:8](#)).

“He shall be broken without hand [apart from human power]” ([Daniel 8:25^e](#))

“And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone” ([Revelation 19:19-20](#)).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(Isaiah 2:6-4:1) Judgment, Described As, *Day of the LORD*—Prophecy, Listed, *Day of the LORD*—Women, Worldly, Judgment of—Judgment, Reason for, Fivefold Reason—Believers, Duty, Twofold Duty—Leaders, Sins of, Oppression—Women, Worldly, God’s Case Against—Judgment, in the Last Days, Discussed: in the future, God’s terrifying judgment will fall upon the earth, a period of time known as the *Day of the LORD* ([Isaiah 2:11, 20](#); [Isaiah 3:7, 18](#); [Isaiah 4:1-2](#)).

This whole section of Scripture gives an excellent description of God’s coming judgment upon the world. The *Day of the LORD* refers to a period of time when God’s judgment will fall upon the nations, and the LORD will be exalted as the sovereign ruler over the entire universe. Right before His kingdom is established on earth, as discussed above ([Isaiah 2:1-5](#)), the darkest night of God’s judgment will cover the earth. All of nature, the very environment of the earth, will be devastated, and millions upon millions of people will die.

1. God’s terrifying judgment—the *Day of the LORD*—**will sweep across the earth for five reasons.** Note the Scripture actually says that God will forsake His people during the *Day of the LORD*. He will not abandon His people because He no longer loves them but because they are forsaking and abandoning Him. They are turning away from the LORD and turning to the world. In the last days of human history, people in general—including those who falsely profess to be God’s people—will become guilty of five serious offenses against the LORD. Because of these offences, God’s terrifying judgment will move swiftly over the earth.

a. People will follow the world of the occult and sorcery ([Isaiah 2:6](#)). They will practice the superstitions of the east, their religions, magic, and forms of meditation and relaxation. In addition, they will practice the divination and sorcery of the west. Participating in the world of the occult and sorcery is expressly forbidden by the LORD.

Acts 16:16-18 (NASB)

“¹⁶ It happened that as we were going to the place of prayer, a slave-girl having a spirit of divination met us, who was bringing her masters much profit by fortune-telling.

¹⁷ Following after Paul and us, she kept crying out, saying, “These men are bond-servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation.”

¹⁸ She continued doing this for many days. But Paul was greatly annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!” And it came out at that very moment.”

Leviticus 19:26 (NASB)

“²⁶ You shall not eat *anything* with the blood, nor practice divination or soothsaying.”

Deuteronomy 18:10 (NASB)

“¹⁰ There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer.”

Deuteronomy 18:14 (NASB)

“¹⁴ For those nations, which you shall dispossess, listen to those who practice witchcraft and to diviners, but as for you, the Lord your God has not allowed you *to do so*.”

2 Kings 21:6 (NASB)

“⁶ He made his son pass through the fire, practiced witchcraft and used divination, and dealt with mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of the Lord provoking *Him to anger*.”

Micah 5:12 (NASB)

“¹² I will cut off sorceries from your hand, And you will have fortune-tellers no more.”

b. People will form evil alliances with unbelievers (**Isaiah 2:6**). Believers and unbelievers will clasp hands, forming business partnerships, seeking more and more money. They will also join hands in marriage, believers marrying unbelievers. Believers will ignore God’s commandment that demands *spiritual separation*. They will fellowship and participate with unbelievers in their worldly activities. Living holy, righteous lives and morally pure lives will be ignored by believers. They will become as worldly as the sinful, wicked unbelievers they associate with. They will pay little attention to God’s commandment against forming evil alliances with unbelievers.

1 Corinthians 5:9-11 (NASB)

“⁹ I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people;

¹⁰ I *did not* at all *mean* with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to go out of the world.

¹¹ But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler—not even to eat with such a one.”

2 Corinthians 6:14-16 (NASB)

“¹⁴ Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?

¹⁵ Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?

¹⁶ Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are

the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I will dwell in them and walk among them; And I will be their God , and they shall be my people."

1 John 2:15-16 (NASB)

¹⁵ Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world."

Exodus 23:2 (NASB)

² You shall not follow the masses in doing evil, nor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after a multitude in order to pervert *justice*."

Exodus 34:12 (NASB)

¹² Watch yourself that you make no covenant with the inhabitants of the land into which you are going, or it will become a snare in your midst."

Psalms 1:1 (NASB)

¹ How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!"

Proverbs 4:14 (NASB)

¹⁴ Do not enter the path of the wicked And do not proceed in the way of evil men."

Proverbs 22:24-25 (NASB)

²⁴ Do not associate with a man *given to anger*; Or go with a hot-tempered man,

²⁵ Or you will learn his ways And find a snare for yourself."

Proverbs 24:1 (NASB)

¹ Do not be envious of evil men, Nor desire to be with them."

c. God will judge people because they place their confidence and money in the things of this world, in a nation's economy, weapons, or military (**[Isaiah 2:7](#)**). We must always remember that God does not always condemn wealth but, rather, the placing of our trust in wealth instead of in Him. This will be a widespread trait of people in the last days. Rather than seeking God, people will seek wealth. Religion will be mainly for social acceptance or for securing and maintaining business contacts. People will clamor for more and more riches and possessions, and nations will struggle to maintain economic strength. Militarily, there will be constant war, and there will be no end to the production of weapons. The result will be constant conflict, one war after another, and a relentless barrage of terrorist actions. Only the LORD Himself will be able to bring peace to earth and execute true justice and judgment upon the nations and peoples of the earth.

d. Fourth, God's terrifying judgment will fall because people engage in idolatry and false worship ([Isaiah 2:8](#)). In *the last days*, the earth will be full of false gods and false worship. False gods are only the creation of people's imaginations, whether they be tangible or intangible idols or merely an idea of what God is like. Any so-called god other than the LORD Himself is simply false, a fabrication of the individual himself or of an individual who conceived it before him. By having a god created by one's own desires or needs, a person can live as he wishes. No restraint is put upon his behavior. He can oppress others, lie, steal, cheat, drink, smoke, have illicit sex, and still be acceptable to *his* god. The person worships a god created by sinful man who allows him to live sinfully, a god who accepts him regardless of his sin. This will be a characteristic of *the last days*. People will engage in all forms of idolatry and worship gods that allow them to live as they wish. But as Isaiah describes in this verse, they are only false gods created by their own hands and fingers, false gods that are stirred from their own ideas and imaginations.

[Romans 1:18-25 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

¹⁹ because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.

²⁰ For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

²¹ For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

²² Professing to be wise, they became fools,

²³ and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

²⁴ Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.

²⁵ For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen."

[1 John 5:21 \(NASB\)](#)

²¹ Little children, guard yourselves from idols."

[Exodus 20:3-5 \(NASB\)](#)

³ You shall have no other gods before Me.

⁴ You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.

⁵ You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God,

am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me.”

Deuteronomy 4:28 (NASB)

“²⁸ There you will serve gods, the work of man's hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell.”

Deuteronomy 11:16 (NASB)

“¹⁶ Beware that your hearts are not deceived, and that you do not turn away and serve other gods and worship them.”

Psalms 81:9 (NASB)

“⁹ Let there be no strange god among you; Nor shall you worship any foreign god.”

Isaiah 42:8 (NASB)

“⁸ I am the Lord, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, Nor My praise to graven images.”

e. The *Day of the LORD*—His execution of justice and judgment—is coming because people will be beyond repentance and forgiveness (**Isaiah 2:9**). Their hearts will be hard, stubborn against God and His Holy Word. No matter how much people hear the gospel and the warning of coming judgment, they still continue in their sin. They love pleasure, recreation, power, wealth, and possessions—the things of this world—more than they love God. Consequently, they harden their hearts against God and stubbornly reject Him time and again. Finally, they become so hardened that they are beyond repentance. They will never give up their worldly pleasures, never surrender to the LORD and seek His forgiveness. Thus, God is left with no choice: justice and judgment must be executed against the hard-hearted and stubborn of this earth.

Acts 7:51 (NASB)

“⁵¹ You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did.”

Romans 2:5-9 (NASB)

“⁵ But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,

⁶ who will render to each person according to his deeds:

⁷ to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life;

⁸ but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.

⁹ *There will be* tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek.”

Hebrews 3:12-13 (NASB)

“¹² Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God.

¹³ But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is *still* called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.”

Proverbs 29:1 (NASB)

“¹ A man who hardens *his* neck after much reproof Will suddenly be broken beyond remedy.”

2. When the *Day of the LORD* comes, the reaction of the people will be that of terror and panic ([Isaiah 2:10-21](#)).

People will seek to escape, hiding in the rocks and caves of the earth, fleeing from the majestic glory and splendor of the LORD. Having denied and rebelled against the LORD all of their lives, they will finally see that Jesus Christ is the Lord God of the universe. His majestic glory will humble the arrogant and prideful of this earth, and they will be brought low. The LORD alone will be exalted in the day of His majestic glory and judgment ([Isaiah 2:11](#)).

In fact, the whole world will be humbled in the *Day of the LORD* ([Isaiah 2:12-18](#)):

1. All the proud and lofty—all who have exalted themselves—will be humbled.
2. All the exalted beauty of creation, such as the cedars of Lebanon and the oaks of Bashan, will be humbled before the majestic glory of the LORD.
3. All the towering mountains and high hills of the earth in their splendid, natural beauty will be humbled before the LORD’s majestic glory.
4. All the world’s military power and defenses, every lofty tower and fortified wall will be humbled in the face of the LORD’s terrifying judgment.
5. All the businesses and economies of this earth, every great commercial ship and every small commercial and recreational boat will be humbled before the glory of the LORD.
6. All the arrogance and pride of man will be brought low and humbled, and the LORD alone will be exalted in the day of his terrifying judgment.
7. All the idols and false worship will be totally destroyed in that great *Day of the LORD* ([Isaiah 2:18](#)).

When the LORD returns to earth in His majestic glory, the idolater will be especially stricken with terror and seek to hide from the coming wrath of God. Note that His wrath will actually shake and turn the world of mankind upside down or, more accurately, right side up ([Isaiah 2:19](#)).

The LORD alone will be acknowledged as the true and living God. The idolater will cast away all idols, leaving them as hiding places for the rats and bats. Whereas the idolater had placed his welfare in the trust of these idols, now the rats and bats could place their welfare in the shelter of the idols. In that day, every idolater on earth will flee into the caverns and jagged rocks of the earth, seeking to escape the glory of the LORD's majesty. In contrast, the LORD will rise up and return to *shake the earth* by executing justice and judgment upon every human being.

3. Again, Isaiah issues the strong challenge to the people of his day as well as to the people of our day. There is only one way to escape God's wrath: spiritual separation.

We must not participate in the behavior of the wicked and idolatrous of this earth ([Isaiah 2:22](#)). It is utterly insane to trust the humanistic, materialistic philosophy of the world. Man is not the supreme being of the universe. He merely possesses the breath of life, breath that can be ever so quickly snuffed out. Standing in his humanistic, secular philosophy and living a selfish and sinful life, man is of no account, no importance. He has value only as he stands in the LORD and lives a life of righteousness, love, and service to mankind. If he rejects the LORD, he will face the terrifying judgment of the LORD. The only way he can escape God's wrath is to set himself apart from those who are evil or who worship false gods. He must not put his trust in man, nor in humanistic, secular philosophy.

4. A description of the approaching judgment of God is next given by the prophet Isaiah ([Isaiah 3:1-7](#)).

Note that the truth spelled out in these verses is a universal truth; that is, it applies to all people of all ages at all times. If a person turns away from the LORD and trusts the things of this world, he eventually loses everything. The things of this world are not lasting. At best, they are temporary, and the security they bring is limited. Thus, if we trust the things of the world, we eventually face collapse, failure, emptiness, loneliness, purposelessness, and insecurity. The things of the world have no future beyond this life.

This was the situation being faced by the people of Jerusalem and Judah in the days of Isaiah. Isaiah wanted them to understand that their trust must be placed in the LORD, not in the leadership and things of this world. As he had just pointed out, man and the things he has made in this world are only temporary ([Isaiah 2:22](#)). Because the people had placed their trust in sinful man and false gods, the LORD Almighty was about to execute judgment upon the nation. Since the penalty of sin is a universal truth, what was about to take place in Jerusalem and Judah will also take place in *the last days* during the *Day of the LORD*.

Five specific judgments are to fall.

1. There will be a loss of the basic necessities of life, including both food and water ([Isaiah 2:1](#)). All the supplies needed to support human life and to maintain a stable government will be used up or lost.
2. There will be a removal of all leaders: military, legal, religious, civil, business and social leaders ([Isaiah 2:2-3](#)). The very backbone of the nation—all capable and wise leaders—will be crushed.
3. There will be a government of weak, inexperienced leaders ([Isaiah 2:4](#)). Political and military leadership will be so inexperienced that it will be as if children were leading the nation.
4. There will be oppression, lawlessness, and anarchy sweeping throughout society ([Isaiah 2:5](#)). Neighbor will rise up against neighbor, children against their parents and the elderly, the base against the honorable. Respect for people will cease to exist. Disrespect, lawlessness, and violence will run rampant throughout society.
5. There will be a spirit of hopelessness gripping people, and nobody will have the answer to the world's problems ([Isaiah 2:6-7](#)). Moreover, no one will desire or be willing to serve in a position of leadership. Utter chaos and depravation will prevail. People will be so hungry and their clothing so ragged that anyone wearing good clothing will be constrained to take a leadership position. However, because of the spirit of hopelessness gripping people, no one will be willing to take the reigns of leadership.

5. Isaiah again emphasized the reasons for such a destructive judgment coming upon Jerusalem and Judah ([Isaiah 2:8-9](#)). Keep in mind that this passage has a double meaning, referring both to the Jews of Isaiah's day and to the people of succeeding generations, the people of *the last days*. Jerusalem will stagger and Judah will fall for two reasons: first, because the people's words and deeds defied the LORD ([Isaiah 2:8](#)). People refused to heed and obey God's Word, His holy commandments. With their tongues they used foul language, cursed the LORD's name, mocked true believers and prophets of the LORD, lied and deceived people and praised their false gods. In their deeds they committed all forms of sin, wickedness, and evil. They simply rebelled against the LORD, committing apostasy against Him.

Second, God's judgment was to fall because the people sinned openly, brazenly, just as Sodom had done ([Isaiah 2:9](#)). They denied God so much that He became meaningless to them.

To them, sin was not sin, so they could live as they wished. They sensed no need to preserve any appearance of godliness before the public. Sin and sinful activity were openly talked about and shamefully practiced for all to see. But note the sharp warning given by Isaiah: woe to their souls! How terrible their judgment would be! They had brought disaster upon themselves.

6. In light of the coming judgment, the believer had two very specific duties ([Isaiah 2:10-12](#)).

Despite the rampant wickedness sweeping the world of Isaiah's day, there was a remnant or small number of true believers. These believers had a specific task to carry out for the LORD.

First, they were to assure the righteous that all believers would be rewarded ([Isaiah 2:10](#)). It would go well for them. They would receive a wonderful reward, reaping the fruits of their righteous deeds.

Second, the believer was to warn the wicked that they would be judged. Disaster was coming upon them! They would be judged for exactly what they have done, nothing more and nothing less. God's judgment would be fair. Perfect justice would be executed upon the wicked.

Two examples are given:

1. The people had turned away from the LORD and placed their trust totally in their leaders. As a result, righteous and capable leaders had been removed from the nation. Now, only young, inexperienced rulers were governing, and many of those were oppressing the people.
2. Unwise women were in some cases exercising strong influence over the inexperienced rulers, leading the young astray.

In all cases, these young, inexperienced rulers were leading the people down the path of disobedience to the LORD. Failing to warn people of the righteous judgment of God, they actually encouraged the worship of false gods and led the people to reject the LORD and His Holy commandments (see [1 Kings 18:4](#); [21:5](#); [2 Kings 11:1](#)).

7. Again, Isaiah painted the scene of a courtroom, presenting the LORD's case against the leaders of Jerusalem and Judah. However, remember, this is a picture of God's case against all leaders who rebel against Him, no matter the generation. It is definitely a picture of God's case against the leaders who will hold positions of authority in *the last days*. The charge is a strong indictment: they have betrayed the trust, the responsibility given them ([Isaiah 2:13-15](#)).

The leaders had oppressed and ruined the vineyard of God, which is Israel or God's people. Whereas they should have tended—looked after and guarded—the vineyard, they had neglected God's people. They had taken advantage of the people under their care, stealing and plundering their property. In some cases the leaders had actually crushed and trampled the faces of the people—even the poor and helpless—into the ground. Note that this charge is a declaration of the LORD, the LORD of hosts or the LORD Almighty ([Isaiah 2:15](#)).

8. The LORD not only had a case against the leaders but also against the haughty, worldly women of society ([Isaiah 3:16-4:1](#)).

Note that these women were “**the daughters or women of Zion (Jerusalem)**.” They were professing believers, women who claimed to know and follow the LORD. But their lives and behavior exposed their *false profession*. In truth they professed one thing and lived another. They were hypocrites. God's case against these women was strong. They were guilty of *pride* and *arrogance*. As they walked throughout the day, they looked down on other people, thinking themselves better, more attractive, more intelligent, and more capable than others. As they walked about, they also flirted with men, using their eyes to get the attention of men. They craved to be recognized as attractive in the eyes of men and to be desired by men. Accordingly, they dressed and behaved immodestly at times. Remember, these women declared they were followers of the LORD. Because they focused their lives and attention upon themselves and the lust of the flesh, they were to face the severe judgment of God. They were to experience deep distress and suffering.

A quick glance at the judgment coming upon them shows how horrible their sufferings would be:

1. They would have sores break out on their heads, somewhat like leprosy ([Isaiah 2:17](#)).
2. They would be uncovered, stripped naked, which probably refers to being raped by invading armies ([Isaiah 2:17](#)).
3. They would lose all their jewelry, wardrobe, perfume, party clothes, gowns, and all else of value ([Isaiah 2:18-23](#)).
4. They would stink instead of smelling sweet ([Isaiah 2:24](#)).
5. They would wear the rope of a captive around their waist, not a sash.
6. They would be bald.
7. They would wear sackcloth, not fine clothing.
8. They would be branded with shame, not beauty.
9. They would be widowed, because their husbands would be killed in battle ([Isaiah 2:25](#)).
10. They would be exiled, led away from Jerusalem into captivity ([Isaiah 2:26](#)).

11. They would face fierce competition for a husband due to so few men surviving the war ([Isaiah 4:1](#)).

Thought 1. The *Day of the LORD* is coming, the day of His terrifying judgment. No person will escape the judgment of God. Perfect justice will be executed on earth. All the oppression and mistreatment of people, the injustices and unfair dealings that have been committed—all wrong behavior—will be judged. We will be punished for the wrong we have done, but only for the wrong we have done. We will never be punished for something we did not do or for something someone else did. Perfect justice will be executed. Whatever judgment we face in the future will be exactly what we deserve.

But the wonderful news is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Christ has taken our wrong, our sins upon Himself. He has already paid the penalty for our sins, which is death. Christ died for our sins. If we will place our trust in Him, surrender our lives to believe and follow Him, God will accept us. He will forgive our sins and count us *righteous* before Him. Our sins will be forgiven, erased, never remembered nor brought up at the judgment seat. Standing before the throne of God's judgment, we will claim only the righteousness of Jesus Christ. When we claim His righteousness—not our own, but His righteousness—God will accept us.

Nevertheless, the thrust of Isaiah's message is not the redemption, not the forgiveness of sins that we have in Christ. The thrust of his message is judgment, because most people refuse to come to the LORD for forgiveness. Most people are still rebelling against God, turning away from Him and walking in the sin and shame of this world. Thus, Isaiah issues a strong warning to all who continue in sin: they will face the judgment of God. Listen to the warning of God's Holy Word:

Matthew 25:31-33 (NASB)

“³¹ But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.

³² All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats;

³³ and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left.”

Mark 8:38 (NASB)

“³⁸ For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”

John 3:36 (NASB)

“³⁶ He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

Romans 1:18 (NASB)

“¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.”

Romans 2:8 (NASB)

“⁸ But to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.”

Ephesians 5:3-6 (NASB)

“³ But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints;

⁴ and *there must be no* filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

⁵ For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.”

2 Thessalonians 1:7-8 (NASB)

“⁷ And *to give* relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire,

⁸ dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.”

Hebrews 9:27 (NASB)

“²⁷ And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this *comes* judgment.”

2 Peter 2:9 (NASB)

“⁹ *Then* the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment.”

2 Peter 3:7 (NASB)

“⁷ But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.”

Jude 1:14-15 (NASB)

“¹⁴ *It was* also about these men *that* Enoch, *in* the seventh *generation* from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones,

¹⁵ to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”

Revelation 1:7 (NASB)

“⁷ Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him,

even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen.”

Psalms 2:12 (NASB)

“¹² Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish *in* the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!”