

# From Dirty to Clean



## SABBATH—FEBRUARY 22

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON:** Daniel 8; Hebrews 9:23–28. (Also, read again Daniel 2 and Daniel 7.)

**MEMORY VERSE:** “One of the holy angels said to me, ‘It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings. Then the temple will be made holy again’ ” (Daniel 8:14, NIV).

**IN 548/547 B.C.,** God gives Daniel another dream. We can read about that dream in Daniel 8. This dream gives us more information about God’s work as Judge in Daniel 7. You will remember that the dreams in Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 start with Babylon. But the dream in Daniel 8 leaves out Babylon and starts with Media-Persia. At this time (548/547 B.C.), Babylon already was losing power. The Persians were ready to replace Babylon as the most powerful kingdom on earth. We will see that the dream in Daniel 8 gives us the same information as Daniel 7. Yes, the word pictures change in Daniel 8. That is because Daniel 8 shows us that God will clean the temple in heaven from sin. So, Daniel 8 talks about what happens in God’s temple in heaven during the end times. But Daniel 7 shows us heaven’s courtroom. It also shows the Son of Man getting the kingdom. Daniel 8 shows that God will make the temple in heaven clean. So, we see that God’s work of cleaning heaven’s temple in Daniel 8 is connected to His work as Judge in Daniel 7.



Daniel 7 shows the Son of Man getting the kingdom.

**THE MALE SHEEP AND THE GOAT (Daniel 8)**

**Read the dream in Daniel 8. What is this dream about? How does it show us many of the same things we have seen in Daniel 2 and Daniel 7?**

As we saw, Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 show us the kingdoms that will control the earth. Daniel 8 shows us the same thing. But Daniel 8 uses new word pictures. These word pictures show us the animals used in God's temple on earth. So, we see a male sheep and a goat. Both animals are connected with God's end-time work of cleaning His temple in heaven. In the Old Testament, Israel's holy leaders used male sheep and goats in their worship of God. The holy leaders gave the male sheep and goats to God as offerings. When is the only time that we read about male sheep and goats together in the worship plan for God's temple? During the time when God cleans His temple from sin. So, those two animals help us think about God's work to remove sin from heaven's temple in the end times.

In the dream, Daniel sees a male sheep with two horns. The sheep pushes in three different directions: west, north, and south (Daniel 8:4). The three directions show that the male sheep grows very powerful: "No animal could stop the ram [male sheep], and no one could save the other animals. The ram did whatever it wanted, and it became very powerful" (Daniel 8:4, ERV). The angel in Daniel's dream explains that the male sheep is a word picture for the kingdom of Media-Persia. The three directions show us the three kingdoms that Media-Persia beat in war.

Next, Daniel sees a goat with a big horn. This goat is the kingdom of Greece. The big horn shows us King Alexander (Daniel 8:21). Do you see that the goat moves so fast that "his feet did not touch the ground" (Daniel 8:5, ICB)? That shows us that Alexander's kingdom grew fast. That is why Daniel 7 shows us Alexander's army as a winged leopard. Daniel 8 shows us what happens next to the goat (Greece): "But after he became strong, his big horn broke off" (Daniel 8:8, ERV). Then four horns grow out of the goat's head. What do all of these horns show? The big horn shows us that Alexander will die when he is young. He dies in Babylon in June of 323 B.C. Then his kingdom is divided up. His four generals (the four horns) take control of it.



**The goat moves so fast that his feet do not touch the ground.**

## THE LITTLE HORN'S GOVERNMENT (Daniel 8:8–12)

**Read Daniel 8:8–12 carefully. How does the little horn move? Why is this information important?**

Yesterday, we saw four horns move in four different directions. The Bible says the little horn comes from **one** of them. One what? One of the four directions? Or from one of the four horns? (We saw that the four horns show King Alexander's four generals.) The Hebrew language shows us that the little horn comes from one of the four directions. These four directions also are named the four winds of heaven. The little horn rises after the Greek Kingdom. So, we easily see that the little horn is Rome. First, the little horn shows us the kingdom of Rome. Then the little horn shows us the Roman Catholic Church. "So, the little horn shows us Rome. First, Daniel saw the horn as the kingdom of Rome. It fought against Jews and Christians in New Testament times. Then Daniel saw the little horn as the Roman Catholic Church. Daniel saw this power continue in the future to our time."—*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, volume 4, page 841, adapted.

The Bible shows us that the little horn first moves **across** the earth. It "grew to the south and to the east and toward the beautiful land of Israel" (Daniel 8:9, NIV). These three directions show the three areas on the earth that Rome took under its control.

Then the little horn moves toward heaven. In this way, the little horn behaves the same as the little horn in Daniel 7. (1) Both horns are little in the beginning (Daniel 7:8; Daniel 8:9). (2) Both horns become powerful later on (Daniel 7:20; Daniel 8:9). (3) Both horns hurt people (Daniel 7:21, 25; Daniel 8:10, 24). (4) Both horns brag and do not respect God (Daniel 7:8, 20, 25; Daniel 8:10, 11, 25). (5) Both horns hurt God's special people (Daniel 7:25; Daniel 8:24). (6) Both horns work for a certain time (Daniel 7:25; Daniel 8:13, 14). (7) Both horns continue until the end times (Daniel 7:25, 26; Daniel 8:17, 19). (8) Both horns will be destroyed by God (Daniel 7:11, 26; Daniel 8:25). As we saw, the little horn in Daniel 7 shows us the Roman Catholic Church. The little horn in Daniel 8 also shows us this same power. So, in Daniel 2, Daniel 7, and in Daniel 8, the final power on earth is Rome: first as the kingdom of Rome, then as the Roman Catholic Church.



**The little horn moves toward heaven.**

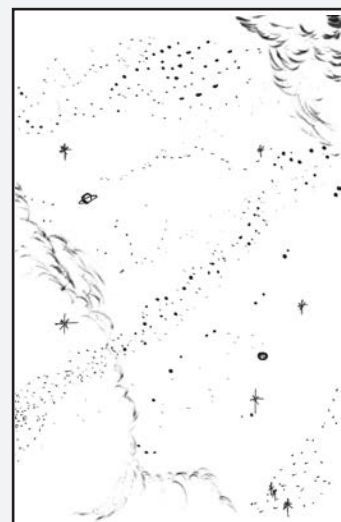
**THE ATTACK ON GOD’S TEMPLE IN HEAVEN  
(Daniel 8:10–12)**

**Read about the little horn’s actions in Daniel 8:10–12. What does the little horn do in these verses?**

The words “heaven’s army” (Daniel 8:10, ERV) and “the stars in the sky” (Daniel 8:10, NlrV) are Old Testament word pictures. They show God’s people. Israel is named “the armies of the LORD” (Exodus 12:41, ERV). Daniel also says God’s loyal people are the same as shining stars (Daniel 12:3). So, we can see that Daniel 8:10 is not talking about the little horn’s war against the angels in heaven. The little horn’s war is against God’s people. They are “citizens of heaven” (Philippians 3:20, NlrV). Yes, several Roman kings killed hundreds of Christians. But that is not what Daniel 8:10 talks about. Daniel 8:10 shows us the little horn’s work when it is the Roman Catholic Church. So, the special message, in Daniel 8:10 shows us the church’s war against God’s people in history.

Also, Daniel 8:11 talks about a “Prince.” Daniel tells us this Prince also is named “the chosen king” (Daniel 9:25, ERV), “Michael your prince” (Daniel 10:21, KJV; read also Daniel 12:1). Who is this Michael? It can only be Jesus. He is the Prince of the “stars in the sky” (Daniel 8:10, NlrV). As we just saw, these stars are a word picture for God’s people. Michael also is our Holy Leader in heaven. Daniel 8 shows us that the little horn, or Roman Catholic Church, tries to replace Jesus’ work in heaven.

In Daniel 8:11, the little horn stops the daily sacrifices, or burnt gifts, that were offered to God. In the Old Testament temple, these gifts were word pictures. They showed the work Jesus does to save sinners. He forgives sin. He will clean sin from the temple too. So, Daniel shows that the Roman Catholic Church tries to replace Jesus’ work in heaven with work done by holy leaders on earth. In this way, the little horn removes Jesus’ work in heaven and throws down His work for us in heaven’s temple. “Truth was thrown down to the ground. The little horn did these things and was very successful [had success]” (ERV). Jesus says that He is the Truth (John 14:6). The Bible is the truth too (John 17:17). The Roman Catholic Church did not allow the Bible to be written in the language of the people in the Middle Ages. Only the church was allowed to say what the Bible meant. The church also made their teachings more important than the Bible.



**God’s loyal people are the same as shining stars.**

**GOD CLEANS HEAVEN'S TEMPLE (Daniel 8:14)****Read Daniel 8:14. What happens in this verse?**


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The little horn makes war against God's people. Then an angel announces that the temple will be cleaned. How are we to understand this message? First, we must remember that the temple cleaning in Daniel 8:14 happens during God's work as Judge in Daniel 7:9–14. Where does God's work as Judge happen? In heaven. So, the temple must be in heaven too. Now we can understand better what Daniel 7 and Daniel 8 are all about. Daniel 7 shows God's work to save humans. Daniel 8 shows us how this same work includes the temple.

God's temple on earth was an exact copy of the temple in heaven. The temple on earth showed God's plan to save humans and solve the sin problem. Every day, sinners brought their gifts to the temple. They said they were sorry for their sins. They were forgiven. Then those sins were carried into the temple. That made the temple dirty. So, the top holy leader had to make the temple clean again. He did that one day a year. That day is named the Day of Atonement, or Cleaning From Sin (Leviticus 16).

Why should the temple in heaven need to be cleaned? When we confess our sins, those sins go into heaven's temple. In the same way, the holy leader took the sins of the forgiven Israelites into the temple on earth. On the Day of Atonement, or Cleaning From Sin, many animals were killed. These animals showed Jesus' future death. His death gives sinners power to stand in front of God on the Day of Atonement.

In the same way, Jesus' blood alone protects us during the time God judges us. Daniel 8:14 tells us God will clean sin from heaven's temple just as the holy leaders cleaned it from the temple on earth. The message of Daniel 8:14 is clear. As sinners, we need Jesus' blood. He forgives us our sins and helps us to stand in front of God our Judge.

**Read Hebrews 9:23–28. How do these verses show us that Jesus' death on the cross saves us from sin?**



**As sinners, we need Jesus' blood. He forgives us our sins and helps us stand clean in front of God our Judge.**



## THE 2,300 DAYS (Daniel 8:13)

**Read Daniel 8:13. What question does one of the holy ones ask in this verse? How does the holy one's question help us understand the answer in the next verse?**

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When do the 2,300 evenings and mornings happen? First, let us remember some things about Daniel's dream before we answer the question. Daniel sees the male sheep and the goat. Next, Daniel sees the little horn make war. Then Daniel hears a holy one ask a question: " 'How long will it take for the things seen in the dream to happen?' " (Daniel 8:13, NLV). We must not limit the time for everything to happen to only the little horn's time in power. Daniel's dream includes everything from the male sheep to the actions of the little horn. So, the time for things to happen will take a long time in history.

Now we can understand the holy one's question better. How long will it take for the things seen in the dream to happen? Or, how long will the male sheep (kingdom of Media-Persia), the goat (kingdom of Greece), and the little horn (the kingdom of Rome and the Roman Catholic Church) be in power? Another angel answers: " 'It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings. Then the temple will be made holy again' " (Daniel 8:14, NIV). This special message about time is very long because it starts during the kingdom of Media-Persia. It includes the kingdom of Greece, the kingdom of Rome, and the Roman Catholic Church during the Middle Ages too. So, the 2,300 days includes hundreds and thousands of years. The year-day rule in Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:5, 6 shows us that the 2,300 evenings and mornings equal 2,300 years. If we do not use the year-day rule to understand this time message, what will happen? Then the 2,300 days will add up to only six real years. That is not enough time for all these things in Daniel's dream to happen.

When do the 2,300 years start? Daniel's dream does not give us this very important piece of information. But Daniel 9 tells us. We will study Daniel 9 next week. After we know when the 2,300 years start, we can figure out when this time will end.



**How long will the male sheep, the goat, and the little horn be in power? The angel answers: 2,300 evenings and mornings.**

**ADDITIONAL THOUGHT:** Here is a chart that helps us understand what we studied so far in Daniel 2, 7, and 8. What does this chart tell us about God’s cleaning the temple in heaven?

Daniel 2	Daniel 7	Daniel 8
Babylon	Babylon	_____
Media-Persia	Media-Persia	Media-Persia
Greece	Greece	Greece
Rome	Rome	Rome
Roman Catholic Church	Roman Catholic Church	Roman Catholic Church
_____	God’s work as Judge in heaven	God cleans the temple in heaven
Second Coming	Second Coming	Second Coming
[Jesus’ kingdom is the stone that is not cut by human hands]	[God’s people get the kingdom]	[God destroys the kingdoms on earth]



We see that God’s work as Judge in Daniel 7 leads to the end of this earth’s history.

The chart shows us that these chapters give the same information. We see the same kingdoms rise to power. Then we see God’s work as Judge in Daniel 7. His work starts after the little horn works for 1,260 years (A.D. 538–1798). The little horn’s work during this time shows us the Roman Catholic Church in the Middle Ages. God’s work as Judge in Daniel 7 happens at the same time that Jesus cleans heaven’s temple. The cleaning happens after the little horn’s power ends in Daniel 8. So, we see that God’s work as Judge in Daniel 7 leads to the end of earth’s history. God’s work as Judge is the same thing as cleaning heaven’s temple in Daniel 8. So, Daniel 7 and 8 show us the same thing in different ways. Both the cleaning of the temple and God’s work as Judge happen after the little horn makes war against God’s people for 1,260 years.

**DISCUSSION QUESTION:**

- 1 How does the chart above show us that cleaning heaven’s temple is the same thing as God’s work as Judge in Daniel 7? Why must these two things happen **after** the 1,260 years that the little horn works and **before** God’s kingdom starts?