



- 1 **Daniel is first given a strange dream involving a ram and a goat (look at vv. 1-14).** And it's not until later that the dream is interpreted for him. Why do you think God chose to reveal the truth in these strange dreams rather than simply telling him what would happen?


 In his commentary on Daniel, David Helm ponders a quote from Joseph Bayly. In what ways can their thoughts help you better meditate on and interact with apocalyptic literature? "I was limited in what I could reveal to them, limited to what their eyes had seen and their language could express. Can you imagine the difficulty of describing a pineapple to an Eskimo on the Arctic tundra? Sweet and juicy blubber is about as close as you could come." (Bayly) I like that. Every Eskimo's expectation for pineapple would certainly be forever heightened if the means of communication allowed for sight and taste! This is also true in biblical apocalyptic. By it, God does not intend to hide things from us. Rather, he hopes to keep us peering intently ahead in anticipation of tasting the real thing. There is nothing like this particular genre to keep us on the edge of our seats, in hope of seeing how things turn out."


 Since Apocalyptic imagery is meant to make things clearer, not hidden, what has become clearer to you as you have interacted with Daniel 8?

- 2 **In the dream of the ram and the goat, God shows Daniel two evil kings that rise to power in the Ancient Near East.** How does God's knowledge and even "allowance" of their rise to power adjust your perspective on the leaders in our lives—civil, work, school, government, etc?

- 3 **This text reveals that God is overseeing history.**


 Discuss God-centeredness and what it means in both the world at large and your own circumstances.

 What differences do the following two perspectives on history make in our everyday lives? 1) A perspective of history that understands it as ultimately about God's glory 2) A perspective of history that is primarily about human accomplishment.

 How has this text specifically influenced you to better grasp God's oversight over history?

- 4 **How do you usually respond when you don't understand why things are happening?** What right responses do you have? What about wrong ones?

 In the last few weeks, when have you been tempted to think that God has abandoned you when you've faced difficulty?

 Read the following verses and meditate on God's promises to never leave or forsake His people. Romans 8:11, Deuteronomy 31:6, Hebrews 13:5, Psalm 23:4, Isaiah 43:2, Hosea 11:8-11

5 In Daniel 8:13-14, Daniel sees that God limits the reach of evil.

♥ *What circumstances have you been facing that you need to remember that though suffering may be long, God always limits it?*

📖 *How will Jesus Christ have the final victory over evil? See also 2 Thess 2:8, Rev. 22:3, Hebrews 10:1-18.*

6 Based on Daniel's response to this vision in Daniel 8:27, how should you respond to Daniel 8?

✍️ *What stood out to you most after studying this text?*

♥ *What will it look like for you to trust God and "go about the King's business" in your life this week? How does this text help you trust God and do the next right thing?*

7 Think about the current situation our country is facing. If we believe the truths about God displayed in Daniel 8, how should that affect how we interact with the COVID-19 news? What should be different about God's people in contrast to the world?

🔊 *What are some creative opportunities to minister and share the gospel with your neighbors, family and coworkers during these tenuous days?*

🔊 *People are afraid, and the effects of this pandemic are going to impact many. We need to ask God to give us confidence in Him and courage to share the gospel with others. Psalm 34:4-5 says, "I sought the Lord, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to him are radiant, and their faces shall never be ashamed." As we trust in the living God through this trial, he will make us radiant in the city. May he help us display the gospel of grace during this time.*

8 Take time to respond to God's word in prayer. The ideas below might offer some direction for a prayer time.

♥ *Ask God to provide you with eyes to see him overseeing history, and ask him to continue to make himself the center of your story. Confess the times you have feared God's abandonment in the middle of difficulty.*

Personalize Psalm 2 in prayer to the Lord

Pray that God would grow your trust in Him as the God who oversees history, is with His people, and is limiting the reach of evil.

Pray that God would help you do the king's business in your life--walk in obedience, pursue holiness, and purify yourself as He is pure.