

Daniel 8

Selective foresight



Daniel's second vision zooms in much more closely than his first. It concentrates on a future ruler who was actually a relatively small player on the international stage, but was to feature hugely in Jewish history several hundred years later. But perhaps the question might arise: *Why all these details (and the much more later in the book) about something way distant in the future? Is all of this necessary? And how does this help us?*

- Once again, what general impressions do you get from this chapter?
- Are there curious phrases that you can't quite get a handle on – even without the basic explanation of v20 onwards? (You might like to note these down for later.)
- So why do Daniel's hearers / readers need this stuff?
Compare this chapter with Matthew's "little apocalypse" in his chapter 24, and note Jesus' comment in v25.
And while we're here, note also Jesus' reference to something appearing in Daniel's prophecy (v15, referring to Daniel 8:13 or 9:27, or both). Does this clarify or confuse?
- Something that might be less than obvious when reading this prophecy is the implicit *encouragement* it should have been to Jews still living *in Babylon*. What do "the glorious land" (9) and the "regular burnt offering" (12,13) more than hint at?
- Which of those curious words or phrases do you want to explore a bit more deeply?
 - "horn(s)"?
 - "Prince of the host" (11)?
 - "the transgression that makes desolate" (13)?
 - "2300 evenings and mornings" (14)? Literal?
 - "the latter end of the indignation" (19)? When?
 - "a king of bold face" (23)? Who?
- What are Daniel's responses to all of this? (27) And ours?