

Whether it was the actual time of the last days or not does not really make any difference: the forces that ultimately produce these events have been at work in every generation, that is why every generation has expected the end to come in its own time.

But the Word of God has made clear what our reaction to these should be both in Daniel's day and every one since. That every single Christian who has ever lived for these two thousand years will be judged as to whether they have taken them seriously or not.

It does not make any difference then whether we live in the actual last days or not; *our reaction to this revelation* will be what reveals how much we believe God and are faithful to His Word.

Community Group Questions:

1. How influential is prophecy on your ability to be faithful to God?
2. In the midst of horrific persecution by Epiphanes many Jewish followers chose death over defilement, how do you think they developed the courage to do so?
3. Whether we're in the "Last Days" or not, how does prophecy drive your sense of urgency in our world today?



**The Second Vision of Daniel
Daniel 8**

Daniel 2	Daniel 7	Daniel 8	Kingdom	Dates
Head of Gold	Lion/Eagles wings		Babylon	605-539 BC
Chest /arms/ silver	Bear 1side higher	2 horned Ram 1 horn longer	Medo-Persia	539-331 BC
Belly,thighs Bronze	Leopard 4 wings 4 heads	Fast goat with prominent horn that breaks off & 4 horns replace it	Greece Ptolemies,Seleucids	331-323 BC 323-63 BC
Legs of iron & feet mixed with clay	Monster iron teeth and 10 horns		Rome and 10 kings	63 BC-AD 476. Present period
Stone not made by human hands	God burns the monster	Lil horn destroyed, not by human hands		Day of the Lord
Mountain fills the whole earth	Kingdom given to Son of Man and God's people		Kingdom of God	Everlasting

Three reasons why Daniel gives this prophecy in chapter 8:

1. To prepare God's people for persecution.
2. To warn them of the general trend of history.
3. To show that Antiochus Epiphanes will be defeated completely in the end.

Two years after the vision of Chapter 7

In the third year of King Belshazzar's reign, I, Daniel, had a vision, after the one that had already appeared to me. ²In my vision I saw myself in the citadel of Susa in the province of Elam; in the vision I was beside the Ulai Canal. Daniel 8:1,2

Verses 3, 4 and 20 identify the soon coming Medio-Persian Empire.

³I looked up, and there before me was a ram with two horns, standing beside the canal, and the horns were long. One of the horns was longer than the other but grew up later. ⁴I watched the ram as it charged toward the west and the north and the south. No animal could stand against it, and none could rescue from its power. It did as it pleased and became great. ... ²⁰The two-horned ram that you saw represents the kings of Media and Persia.

Verses 5-8, 21,22 describes Greece and Alexander the Great.

⁵As I was thinking about this, suddenly a goat with a prominent horn between its eyes came from the west, crossing the whole earth without touching the ground. ⁶It came toward the two-horned ram I had seen standing beside the canal and charged at it in great rage. ⁷I saw it attack the ram furiously, striking the ram and shattering its two horns. The ram was powerless to stand against it; the goat knocked it to the ground and trampled on it, and none could rescue the ram from its power. ⁸The goat became very great, but at the height of its power the large horn was broken off, and in its place four prominent horns grew up toward the four winds of heaven. . . . Daniel 8:5-8

²¹The shaggy goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between its eyes is the first king. ²²The four horns that replaced the one that was broken off represent four kingdoms that will emerge from his nation but will not have the same power. Daniel 8:21,22

Verses 9 to 14 describes Antiochus Epiphanes

⁹Out of one of them came another horn, which started small but grew in power to the south and to the east and toward the Beautiful Land. ¹⁰It grew until it reached the host of the heavens, and it threw some of the starry host down to the earth and trampled on them. ¹¹It set itself up to be as great as the commander of the army of the Lord; it took away the daily sacrifice from the Lord, and his sanctuary was thrown down. ¹²Because of rebellion, the Lord's people and the daily sacrifice were given over to it. It prospered in everything it did, and truth was thrown to the ground. ¹³Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to him, "How long will it take for the vision to be fulfilled—the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, the rebellion that causes desolation, the surrender of the sanctuary and the trampling underfoot of the Lord's people?" ¹⁴He said to me, "It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated."

The 8th king in the dynasty of the Seleucids was Antiochus Epiphanes. He ruled from 175BC-164BC. Nearly 400 years after Daniel's vision in Chapter 8.

Antiochus Epiphanes being Greek wanted to do everything he could to destroy their *Jewishness and Hellenize Israel*.

The angel Gabriel is introduced in the vision

¹⁵While I, Daniel, was watching the vision and trying to understand it, there before me stood one who looked like a man. ¹⁶And I heard a man's voice from the Ulai calling, "Gabriel, tell this man the meaning of the vision." Daniel 8:15,16

¹⁷As he (Gabriel) came near the place where I was standing, I was terrified and fell prostrate. "Son of man," he said to me, "understand that the vision **concerns the time of the end.**" ¹⁸While he was speaking to me, I was in a deep sleep, with my face to the ground. Then he touched me and raised me to my feet. ¹⁹He said: "I am going to tell you what will happen **later in the time of wrath**, because the vision concerns **the appointed time of the end.**" Daniel 8:17-19

²⁰The two-horned ram that you saw represents the kings of Media and Persia. ²¹The shaggy goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between its eyes is the first king. ²²The four horns that replaced the one that was broken off represent four kingdoms that will emerge from his nation but will not have the same power. Daniel 8:20-22

This passage is very difficult to interpret with any certainty-

²³"In the latter part of their reign, when rebels have become completely wicked, a fierce-looking king, a master of intrigue, will arise. ²⁴He will become very strong, but not by his own power. He will cause astounding devastation and will succeed in whatever he does. He will destroy those who are mighty, the holy people. ²⁵He will cause deceit to prosper, and he will consider himself superior. When they feel secure, he will destroy many and take his stand against the Prince of princes. Yet he will be destroyed, but not by human power. ²⁶"The vision of the evenings and mornings that has been given you is true, but seal up the vision, for it concerns the distant future." Daniel 8:23-26

1. Some see these verses being completely fulfilled in Antiochus Epiphanes.
2. Others see this passage as representing a future period of the final antichrist of the Book of Revelation.
3. Still others see believe this prophecy has a double fulfillment. *Concerning both Antiochus Epiphanes, future final world ruler.*

²⁷I, Daniel, was worn out. I lay exhausted for several days. Then I got up and went about the king's business. I was appalled by the vision; it was beyond understanding. Daniel 8:27

Someone said to me, "If I knew for sure that these were the last days, I would live a lot differently than I am." **Would you?**