**A VISION OF THE FUTURE PAST**

**(Daniel 8:1-27)**

 When I was in college at OBU, chapel attendance was mandatory. A student had to make it to so many chapel services each semester. Chapel was scheduled for each Wednesday morning at 10:00. You could probably count on two hands and have several fingers left over the number of times that I missed chapel.

 With the exception of the one chapel in which I preached, I would have a hard time telling you the main point of any of those many lectures and messages I heard. There was one speaker, however, that to this day, I can still tell you the outline of his message. He had three points:

1. The Past Is Present.
2. The Present Is Tense.
3. The Future Is Perfect.

 I thought about that outline as I chose the title for tonight’s message. The title is, “A Vision of Future Past.” When Daniel received the vision that is found in our passage, Daniel 8, the vision concerned what for Daniel would be the future. We who read the vision, however, are not looking forward as Daniel did. We are looking backward. From our vantage point, the vision concerned the past.

 We are going to do three things tonight. We will consider:

1. The Vision—What Daniel Saw.
2. The Interpretation—What It Meant.
3. The Lessons—What We Can Learn.
4. **CONSIDER THE VISION—WHAT DANIEL SAW.**

 Let’s read vv. 1-14. We need to do some review. Do you remember the vision Nebuchadnezzar had of a metallic statue in chapter 2? It was composed of a golden head. Then silver arms. Third, there was a bronze midsection. Finally, he saw legs of iron.

 In Daniel 7, Daniel himself had a vision of the same kingdoms but they were portrayed as beasts. This is the difference between man’s view of the kingdoms of this world and God’s view of the kingdoms of men.

 One man observed, “A beast is power without conscience. Likewise, government without God is power without conscience. That is God’s view of government without Himself.”

 Daniel began his book by writing in Hebrew. Beginning in 2:4 through the end of chapter 7, he wrote in Aramaic. Beginning in chapter 8, he has resumed writing in Hebrew. What follows is of particular concern to the Jews.

 The third year of the reign of Belshazzar would have been roughly around 550 B.C., maybe 551.

1. **CONSIDER THE INTERPRETATION—WHAT IT MEANT.**

Let’s read vv. 15-27. The ram stood for the Kingdom of the Medes and Persians while the goat stood for the Kingdom of Greece. The great horn is Alexander. When he died, his kingdom was divided into four smaller kingdoms.

 The Seleucid Kingdom had a succession of 26 kings from 312 BC to 63 BC. The land of Judah and Israel was part of that kingdom. The 8th King was a man name Antiochus IV. He gave himself the name Epiphanes. He is considered the antichrist of the OT.

 Consider some of the things Antiochus did when he came to power. He wanted the Jewish people to accept Greek culture. They were told they could no longer observe the Sabbath Day. They could not circumcise their male babies. They were to accept the Greek deities. On and on, the list of abuses continued . . .

1. **CONSIDER THE LESSONS—WHAT WE CAN**

 **LEARN.**

 We need to take to heart what we find in Romans 15:4. God can and want to use this story to encourage us.

1. **We Have a Miraculous Bible.**
2. **We Have a Supernatural God.**
3. **We Have a Trustworthy Guide.**
4. **We Have a Secure Future.**