

# GODLY LIVING IN A GODLESS WORLD

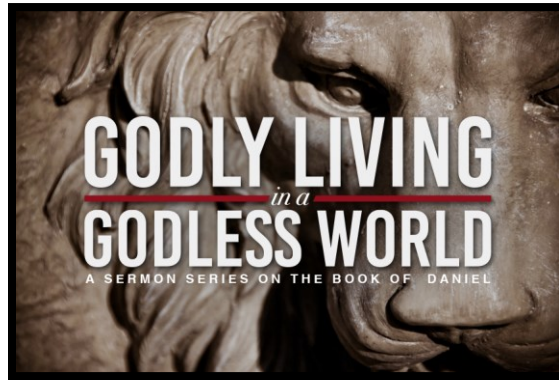
## Expositional Study Of Daniel

Daniel 8:1

Written By

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What will the time be like as we approach the end of the age of man's selfish, sinful rule over the world? Peter warns us, "... knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (2 Peter 3:3-4). Godless scoffers will be the order of the day, and they will waste no time taunting Christians who actually (still) believe a living being called God is going to come and judge all mankind for either accepting or rejecting Him as their Savior. They will find this belief laughable and highly unreasonable, so *they*, the tolerant, broadminded, enlightened ones will become (justifiably) intolerant, narrow-minded, and unenlightened as they will mock Christians for holding to the stupidity of faith.

Are you a mocker? Do the genes of spiritual skepticism form your mental make-up? Are you antagonistic to the Christian faith in a variety of intellectually smug covert and overt ways? If so, you are matching the mind-set Peter prophesied would characterize the time of the end. Daniel, some five hundred years prior to Peter, prophesied similarly. His divinely appointed words about rise and fall of the final world empires prior to the actual revelation of Jesus, the Christ, demonstrate how skeptical and oppositional the world will become to the exclusivist belief in one living Trinitarian Being. Are you a rude reflection of the divinely inspired prophecy of these two holy men?

In Daniel chapter 8, the prophet gives skilled skeptics good, solid reasons for abandoning their wicked worldview and embracing the logical, reasonable nature of faith in the living God who is guiding world history to its appointed consummation. Interesting. The very God you mock is the very God who reaches out to you, the thinking person, with hard evidence designed to shatter your false thinking so you can have the hope of becoming one of His children. I'd call

that a heavy dose of grace and mercy. What will you do with the grace and mercy, with the evidence, is another question altogether.

Additionally, as anti-Christian mocking and scoffing flourishes in the end times like crabgrass in a summer lawn, what should believers think? What should believers say? How should believers feel? Fortunately, Daniel provides helpful answers to these personal questions as he works his way through yet another spectacular, jaw-dropping prophecy about end times.

Within the framework of this tremendous passage, we readily encounter a motif we've already mentioned.

## God Gives Proofs To The Skeptic And Plans To The Saint In Order to Eradicate And Educate (Daniel 8:1-27)

Before we see how God disclosed this practical message to his prophet, we need to pause and make a few contextual observations since we have headed into another intricate prophetic passage.

One, the chapters of the book of Daniel are not presented in a linear chronological flow. Daniel 8:1 tells us this much: *"In the third year of the reign of Belshazzar the king a vision appeared to me, Daniel, subsequent to the one which appeared to me previously."* Belshazzar enjoyed a co-regency with his father, Nabonidus, starting around 550 B.C. Hence, this means Daniel received this particular prophecy around 547 B.C., or eight years before the fall of Babylon as recorded in Daniel chapter 5. Similarly, Daniel 7:1 states, *"In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head while on his bed."* Timewise this would be 550 B.C., which, again, was well before the handwriting on the wall and the invasion of Babylon recorded in chapter 5. The chronological flow of the book, therefore, should be chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 5, 9, 6, 10, 11, 12.

Two, this is important because God's disclosure of the rise and fall of the final world empires, starting with Babylon, illustrates several things. One, it demonstrates that God warns unbelievers, even the mocking type, before He comes in judgment. He is merciful and compassionate, not wanting any to perish. Two, it demonstrates that God gives unbelievers ample evidence to believe in Him, after all, who else could have known which nations would rise and fall with exact precision other than the living God? Please, don't think for a moment God doesn't give you evidences to believe in Him. Far from it. The prophetic word is one case in point.

Three, as I've said in our initial introduction, chapters 1:1-2:3 is in Hebrew; chapters 2:4-7:28 are in Aramaic, the language of the captivity; and chapters 8:1-12:13 is a return to Hebrew. Why? Good question. There are several answers.

For one, the first panel deals with the fall of Jerusalem and the deportation of some of their key young people to Babylon. In order to give these captives and their families hope, God spoke in their language to demonstrate He providentially guided the tragic event toward His purposes.

For another, the middle narrative panel is in Aramaic because God wanted to make sure the godless captors understood in their own language that He was the living God, these Jews were His people, and that He was in absolute control of world history, despite what they thought or taught. The factual fulfillment of the prophetic information could then be used to possibly lead some of these people to true faith.

In addition, the last section returns to Hebrew because God wants to highlight Israel's part in His messianic kingdom plan so they would cling tightly to Him, as well as be courageous in the dark, tough days before His revelation. True, chapter 8 does talk about the activity of two Gentile nations; however, their activity is seen in its direct relation to Israel. Persecution would come to God's people at the hands of godless Gentiles but it would not be perpetual. On the contrary, God spoke in Hebrew to encourage His chosen people to stay the course of faith no matter what because His kingdom plan will prevail. Isn't this just like God to comfort His people with His Word before the road gets rough? He promised not just to be with you, but to control where your journey takes you. Jesus, in New Testament times, took the same approach with Christians: "*Remember the word I spoke to you, no slave is greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you*" (John 15:20). There is comfort knowing He has walked down the hard road or persecution long before us.

Four, preaching and teaching prophecy is, at times, difficult, especially in how a given passage unfolds. Chapter eight is no exception. In the first 14 verses, Daniel receives another vision about animals, and in verses 15 through 26 God, via the archangel Gabriel, gives him the much coveted interpretation. Ostensibly, this means we cannot preach straight through this passage, but must, for pedagogical purposes, jump from one section to the next.

Five, this passage, along with chapter 11, contains intricate and important (now) historical information about two middle eastern nations. From Daniel's timeline, however, this was prophetic data, spoken some two to three hundred years *before* the fact. One lone old Jewish/Babylonian political official might have been lucky and scored on some of this geo-political analysis a couple of months before the fact but not two to three hundred years! God gave us this prophetic precision in order to decimate skepticism about His existence. Further, because the passage is chock-full of ancient history, it warrants our close analysis in order to validate the prophecy.

With these foundational thoughts in mind, I think we are prepared to sail our interpretive ship into these wonderful waters. From my study and analysis of this text, two supportive points buttress the main motif presented above. We will launch into the first of these two in this study.

### The Skeptic Possesses Proofs To Validate Belief (Daniel 8:2-14, 20-26)

The problem with the skeptic/mocker is not the lack of adequate and powerful information which can point directly to God it is, conversely, a will to submit to the evidence. Consider the powerful prophetic proofs in these verses.

*The prophecy of Medo-Persia's rise and fall is proof #1 (Daniel 8:2-4, 20).*

<sup>2</sup> I looked in the vision, and while I was looking I was in the citadel of Susa, which is in the province of Elam; and I looked in the vision and I myself was beside the Ulai Canal. <sup>3</sup> Then I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a ram which had two horns was standing in front of the canal. Now the two horns *were* long, but one *was* longer than the other, with the longer one coming up last. <sup>4</sup> I saw the ram butting westward, northward, and southward, and no *other* beasts could stand before him nor was there anyone to rescue from his power, but he did as he pleased and magnified *himself*.

Did God actually transport Daniel's body from Babylon some three hundred miles southeast to Susa/Shushan? Probably not, although He could have. Because this was a high definition vision, Daniel's spirit, like that of Ezekiel (Ezekiel 8:3) and John (Revelation 17:3), most likely moved to this location within the vision. Why did God take Daniel here? Shushan would eventually be the capital of the mighty Persian empire, the location where the Jews under the leadership of Nehemiah, Esther, and Mordecai would find themselves in God's providential plan in the future (Nehemiah 1:1; Esther 1:2-5). In 547 B.C. this Shushan (which is now in modern day Iran) had not yet ascended to mighty fortress status among the nations. In fact, this area was so unknown to the typical Babylonian Daniel added the word "Elam" to delineate its exact location. The addition of the Ulai canal also helped readers understand where the location of this obscure city was located. All of this, of course, adds intrigue and potency to the prophecy, as we shall see.

While looking at the canal, Daniel saw an unusual ram sporting two horns, with one obviously longer than the other. This particular and unusual ram also butted its way to dominate three points of the compass, all while wasting no time speaking of its greatness. Once the entire vision concluded Daniel, of course, wanted to know its interpretation.

<sup>15</sup> When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it; and behold, standing before me was one who looked like a man. <sup>16</sup> And I heard the voice of a man between *the banks of Ulai*, and he called out and said, "Gabriel, give this *man* an understanding of the vision." <sup>17</sup> So he came near to where I was standing, and when he came I was frightened and fell on my face; but he said to me, "Son of man, understand that the vision pertains to the time of the end." <sup>18</sup> Now while he was talking with me, I sank into a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me and made me stand upright. <sup>19</sup> He said, "Behold, I am going to let you know what will occur at the final period of the indignation, for *it* pertains to the appointed time of the end (Daniel 8).

Gabriel, one of two archangels of God (Michael is the other chief angel, Jude 9; Revelation 12:7), angels who assumed the lead positions in God's army once Satan defected with his "troops," gave Daniel the coveted illumination. How interesting. Gabriel is the same angel who would give Daniel prophetic insight in Daniel 9:21, and five hundred years later he would speak to Zacharias and Mary about the coming of the messianic forerunner, John, and the arrival of the Messiah, Jesus (Luke 1:19, 26). Interesting, while the Devil, their former leader (Ezekiel 28:11-19), sought to thwart the messianic kingdom plan of God in Daniel's day, Gabriel made sure the prophet knew and relayed to the people that God's program couldn't be more on track.

Gabriel quickly identified the ram.

<sup>20</sup> The ram which you saw with the two horns represents the kings of Media and Persia.

This identification, of course, coincides with the breast and arms of silver (Daniel 2:32) and the bear (Daniel 7:5). Media-Persia was all of these. Now, the alliance is pictured as a ram. Why? The ram was their national emblem, it appeared on their coinage, and Persian rulers had the image of the ram on their crowns.

Originally and historically, Media exercised supremacy over their ally Persia; however, in time, Persia, the smaller horn, eventually grew to be higher and more powerful than their

Median counterpart. Additionally, under the leadership of Cyrus, Persia did dominate the countries to her west, north, and south, just as God said they would. For instance, he defeated Lydia and Sardis (547 B.C.) and Babylon (539 B.C.) to the west, he dominated nomads near the northern Black and Caspian Seas.

Again, there is no way Daniel could have known this precise information years prior to the fact. The living God, the God who created time and space simply told him what was going to happen within this particular kingdom. And you say to believe is illogical. I think you should think again and ask if this is sound, consistent, logical thinking. Statistically, the probability Daniel could have known this information with this high degree of precision is so great it is a number which is not computable. If your odds of winning the lottery is 1/12,271,512 I would conclude two things: One, you are probably not going to win with those odds, and, two, you probably won't win two times back to back. No way. To increase your odds to 50%, according to one website, you would need to purchase 8 million individual tickets. Right. Like that is going to happen.

Further, no one is going to name the actual winner of a future game a couple of hundred years before the fact either. And they certainly wouldn't be able to predict that one winner, out of two, would eventually rise to be more financially powerful than the other. That, logically and realistically, is just not going to happen . . . EVER. I would say this is some kind of proof to turn toward God. Not many Babylonians did in Daniel's day, nor did the Medo-Persians. I hope you are made of different spiritual stuff.

*The prophecy of Greece's rise and fall is proof #2* (Daniel 8:5-8, 21). Here Daniel learns, as he did before (Daniel 2, 7), that Greece, a weak power at the time (547 B.C.) would one day defeat the mighty and unstoppable army of the Medo-Persians. Once more, the *precise* prophecy was given 216 years before the fact! (Medo-Persia fell in 331 B.C.).

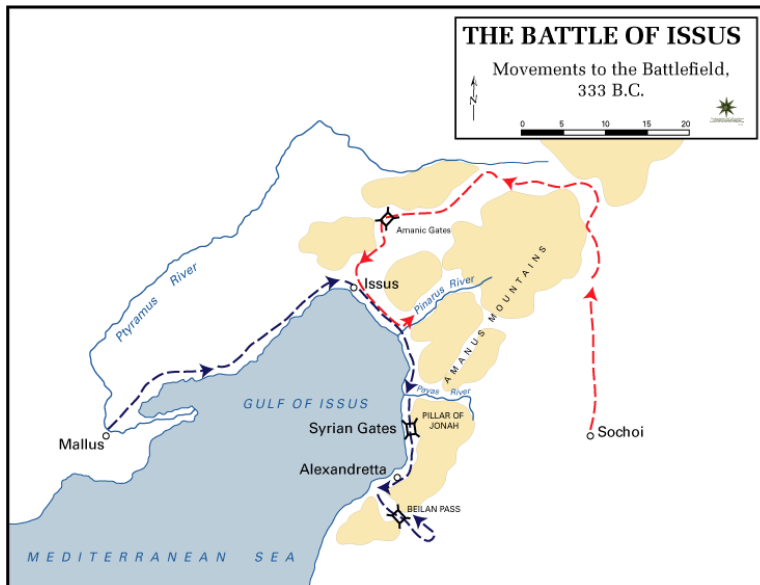
<sup>5</sup> While I was observing, behold, a male goat was coming from the west over the surface of the whole earth without touching the ground; and the goat *had* a conspicuous horn between his eyes. <sup>6</sup> He came up to the ram that had the two horns, which I had seen standing in front of the canal, and rushed at him in his mighty wrath. <sup>7</sup> I saw him come beside the ram, and he was enraged at him; and he struck the ram and shattered his two horns, and the ram had no strength to withstand him. So he hurled him to the ground and trampled on him, and there was none to rescue the ram from his power. <sup>8</sup> Then the male goat magnified *himself* exceedingly. But as soon as he was mighty, the large horn was broken; and in its place there came up four conspicuous *horns* toward the four winds of heaven.

As before, the archangel Gabriel identifies this intense and powerful male goat:

<sup>21</sup> "The shaggy goat *represents* the kingdom of Greece, and the large horn that is between his eyes is the first king. <sup>22</sup> "The broken *horn* and the four *horns that* arose in its place *represent* four kingdoms *which* will arise from *his* nation, although not with his power.

Alexander the Great was, without question, the first king, and he fulfilled this prophecy to the letter. He conquered the known world so quickly it was as if his feet didn't touch the ground.

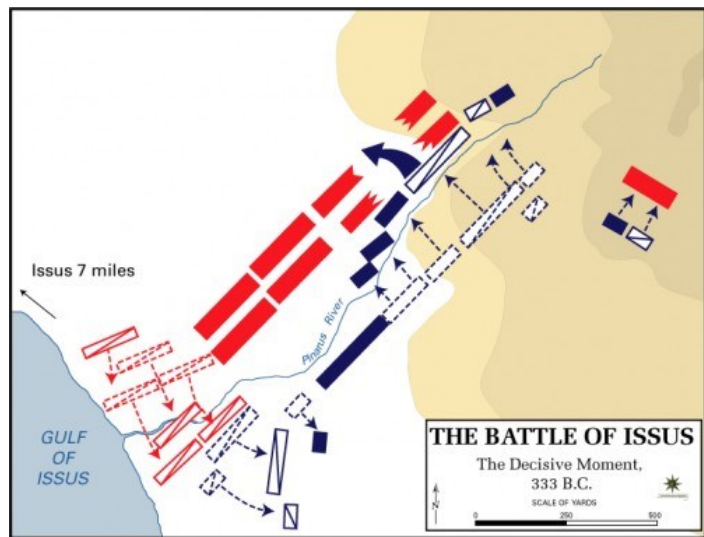
True, he had a small inferior force (32,000 infantry and 5,100 cavalry), compared to, say the Persians with their two million soldiers; however, his fighters fought better, wiser (they used the dreaded phalanx formation for battle), and faster.



What motivated Alexander? His father, Philip of Macedon (viz., Macedonia, which was located due north of Athens and Thebes), wanted to consolidate the Greek region, but the Athenian and Thebians viewed the Macedonians as an inferior, less intelligent people; therefore, they resisted Philip's desire. Realizing they had a unique opportunity to exploit to their advantage, the Persians supplied money and weapons to the Athenians and Thebians.<sup>1</sup> Philip eventually defeated this strong alliance in 338 B.C. near the city of Chaeronea in Boeotia (central

Greece). Two years later in October of 336, Pausanias, one of the king's bodyguards, assassinated him (there are many theories as to why he acted in this fashion). This set the stage for the young Alexander to assume leadership of the new, consolidated nation.

As the new leader, Alexander crossed the Hellespont into Asia Minor and moved southeast where he wiped out the Persian army at Granicus. He, then, marched south and defeated and freed the city of Ephesus (Ephesus) in 334 B.C. Moving southward he dominated the Persians at Halicarnassus located near the coast of southern Asia Minor. On November 5, 333 B.C., Alexander engaged the larger Persian troops under the leadership of Darius III at the battle of Issa, located along or northern finger of the Mediterranean Sea just north of Syria. He left his wounded from another battle at the port city, but Darius over-ran their position when Alexander left in pursuit of Darius. The Persian king either executed the wounded or severed



<sup>1</sup> Note: The Teban army was composed of the Sacred Ban, a homoerotic paired unit of some 300 infantrymen. The thinking, if correct, was simple: The lovers would fight more valiantly if they were together. This strategy proved true when they defeated the mighty Spartans in the Battle of Tegyra in 375 B.C. and in the Battle of Leuktra in 371 B.C. They were a force to be reckoned with; however, Alexander defeated them with his cavalry in 338 B.C. After their defeat, they continued to buck the rule of Alexander so he destroyed their main city and sold off the population in to harsh slavery.

their right hand. Not much has really changed in this region has it? This brutal action served to motivate Alexander and his troops to decimate the Persians, which they did near the Penarus River located just south of the city.

Donald Wasson recounts what happened in an entry he wrote for *Ancient History Encyclopedia*:

The entire battle did not go well for Darius. Despite the advantage of numbers, he and his men were soon on the defensive, unable to maneuver as they would have liked. Darius's left flank was hampered by the river valley, mountains on his left and the sea on his right.

Alexander, on the other hand, was able to use his trusted phalanx formation. His right flank extended to the mountains and his left to the sea. He had three battalions on the right and four to the left with heavy infantry in the middle. After viewing Alexander's formation, Darius moved his cavalry to attack Alexander's right with hopes of breaking through his right flank. Although hampered by the river bank and stockades erected by Darius, Alexander and his Companion cavalry moved quickly through the Darius's left flank. Attempts to drive Alexander back across the Pinarus failed.

Alexander and his forces turned toward the Persian center where he spotted Darius. Although Darius's brother Oxathres attempted to block Alexander's charge, he failed. Darius fled the battle at first in his chariot and then on horseback. Despite a serious thigh wound, Alexander would pursue him until nightfall but returned empty-handed. Meanwhile, Alexander's left flank, under the leadership of Parmenion, was having problems with Darius's right. However, when the Persian forces saw their leader flee, they fled, too; many were trampled to death in the mass exit. In all the Persians 100,000 foot soldiers and 10,000 cavalry while Alexander only lost 1,200.<sup>2</sup>

Like the Medo-Persian leader, Alexander also magnified himself and his greatness (Daniel 8:8), which is to be indicative of the world leaders prior to the coming of the Christ. The Hebrew here is most instructive. The opening noun for "goat" is wedded to a waw coordinating conjunction thereby creating a waw disjunctive clause . . . or a highly emphatic statement.

וְצִפּוֹר הָעֵזִים הַגָּדוֹל עַד־מֵאָ

The emphasis rests upon the magnitude of this particular goat called Greece because it became the fastest moving and most successful army in the world up to this time. They invented blitzkrieg long before the Germans in WWII. The following verbal statement followed by descriptive adverb is also telling.

<sup>2</sup> Donal L. Wasson, "The Battle of Issus," *Ancient History Encyclopedia*, November 24, 2011, accessed September 8, 2015, [http://www.ancient.eu/Battle\\_of\\_Issus/](http://www.ancient.eu/Battle_of_Issus/).

וְצִפִּיר הָעֵזִים הַגָּדֹל עַד־מָא

The word for “magnified” (NAS) or “very great” (NIV) is *gadal* (גָּדַל). Literally it lexically means to make a big pile of wood and then set it on fire, something akin to a bomb fire (Ezekiel 24:9).<sup>3</sup> What a great term to use to speak of arrogance. Isn’t it just like this? What it tells us is Alexander wasted no time speaking about and drawing attention to his warfare prowess, but the arrogance did not stop here. He called himself the son of Zeus, and by so doing set himself up as a demi-god. This title certainly dovetailed with a relative named Olympias who taught him he was the product of a virgin birth, a true son of the gods. Right.

After defeating the Persians at Issus, Alexander attacked and defeated Damascus and Sidon 333 B.C.). The island fortress of Tyre, which was one of the wealthy commercial centers of the world, did not go so easily into the night. A large contingent of Phoenician soldiers, paid by the Persians, manned the walls of the supposedly impregnable fortress. Tyre has basically two cities, one on the mainland and one located in their island fortress just off of the coast. If an enemy attacked the mainland city, then the inhabitants just retreated to the island fortress for complete safety. God, on the other hand, had prophesied differently against these ancient arrogant and warring people.

Prophesying from 592-570 B.C., Ezekiel gives us an amazing precise prophecy of the fall of this fortress:

<sup>3</sup>Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 152. גָּדַל S<sup>1431</sup> TWOT<sup>315</sup> GK<sup>1540</sup><sub>115</sub> **vb. grow up, become great** (Aramaic גָּדַל (Ithpe.), حَدَل (gdal) twist, twine, Arabic جَدَل (jadala) twist a cord, make firm, strong, become strong, so NH)—**Qal Pf.** ג etc. Gn 38:14 + 14 times; sf. גָּדַלְנִי Jb 31:18; **Impf.** יִגְדַּל etc. ψ 35:27 + 34 times;— **1. grow up, a.** child Gn 21:8, 20; 25:27; 38:11, 14 Ex 2:10, 11 (JE) Ju 11:2; 13:24 Ru 1:13 1 S 2:21; 3:19 1 K 12:8, 10 (= 2 Ch 10:8, 10) 2 K 4:18; גָּדַלְנִי כְּאָב he grew up to me as to a father Jb 31:18; **b.** lamb 2 S 12:3. **2. become great, a.** in extent, wealthy Gn 26:13<sup>0</sup>; 41:40 (JE) Je 5:27; **b.** in value, יִבְעֵינִי בְּעֵינֵי נָפֶשׁ גָּדְלָהּ prized by 1 S 26:24<sup>0</sup>; **c.** in intensity, grief Jb 2:13, mourning Zc 12:11, punishment La 4:6, trespass Ezr 9:6; **d.** in sound, loud cry Gn 19:13 (J); **e.** in importance, of a king Ec 2:9 1 K 10:23 (= 2 Ch 9:22) Dn 8:9, 10 (under fig. of horn), chief Gn 24:35; 48:19 (J), Messiah Mi 5:3, Jerusalem Ez 16:7; **f.** of God 2 S 7:22 ψ 104:1, his works ψ 92:6, his power Nu 14:17 (J). **3. to be magnified, a.** house of David Zc 12:7; **b.** Yahweh ψ 35:27; 40:17; 70:5 Mal 1:5, his name 2 S 7:26 (= 1 Ch 17:24). **Pi.** Pf. גָּדַל Jos 4:14 Est 3:1; גָּדַל Is 49:21; גָּדְלָהּ Is 51:18, etc.; **Impf.** יִגְדַּל Is 44:14 + 8 times; **Imv.** וְיִגְדַּל ψ 34:4; **Inf.** גָּדַל Nu 6:5 + 3 times; **Pt.** מְגַדְּלִים 2 K 10:6 (מְגַדְּלוֹת) Ct 5:13 𐤄 𐤁 Hi Bō De);— **1. cause to grow**, e.g. hair Nu 6:5 (P), plants Jon 4:10 Is 44:14 Ez 31:4 Ct 5:13; **bring up children** 2 K 10:6 Is 1:2; 23:4; 49:21; 51:18 Dn 1:5 Ho 9:12. **2. make great, powerful** Gn 12:2 (J) Jos 3:7; 4:14 (D) 1 K 1:37, 47 1 Ch 29:12, 25 2 Ch 1:1 Est 3:1; 5:11; 10:2. **3. magnify, a.** man Jb 7:17; **b.** God ψ 34:4 w. ל, 69:31. **Pu.** **Pt.** pl. מְגַדְּלִים brought up ψ 144:12. **Hiph.** **Pf.** הִגְדִּיל ψ 41:10 +, etc.; **Impf.** יִגְדִּיל Is 42:21 Dn 8:25, etc.; **Inf.** הִגְדִּיל 1 Ch 22:8 Am 8:5; **Pt.** מְגַדֵּיל ψ 18:51 (= מְגַדֵּיל in || 2 S 22:51); pl. מְגַדִּילִים ψ 35:26;— **1. make great**, e.g. shekel Am 8:5, pile for fire Ez 24:9, joy Is 9:2, counsel Is 28:29, wisdom Ec 1:16, works Ec 2:4, house of Yahweh 1 Ch 22:5; the heel ψ 41:10 either *lifted high* (Ges), or (cf. De Now) *gave me insidiously a great fall*; cf. פִּיךָ Ob 12 i.e. utter proud words (v. רָחַב Hiph.). **2. magnify**, salvation ψ 18:51, so || 2 S 22:51 (Kt מְגַדֵּיל > Qr מְגַדֵּיל). mercy Gn 19:19 (J), teaching Is 42:21, the word of Yahweh ψ 138:2. **3. do great things** הִגְדִּיל לַעֲשׂוֹת, **a.** in a good sense, of God ψ 126:2, Jo 2:21, also pregn. without Inf. 1 S 12:24. **b.** in bad sense, of ‘the northern one’ Jo 2:20, also pregn. without Inf. La 1:9 Zp 2:8, 10 Dn 8:4, 8, 11, 25; with עַל, of enemies ψ 35:26; 38:17; 55:13 Jb 19:5 Je 48:26, 42; Ez 35:13 of speaking עַל פִּיכֶם **c.** also, with Inf. implied, wept greatly 1 S 20:41. **Hithp.** **Pf.** וְהִתְגַּדַּלְתִּי Ez 38:23 I will magnify myself, shew myself great and powerful (of God); **Impf.** יִתְגַּדַּל, with עַל in a bad sense, magnify oneself against Is 10:15 Dn 11:36; יִתְגַּדַּל Dn 11:37.



<sup>3</sup> therefore thus says the Lord GOD: See! I am coming at you, Tyre; I will churn up against you many nations, even as the sea churns up its waves; <sup>4</sup> They shall destroy the walls of Tyre and raze her towers. I will scrape the ground from her and leave her a bare rock; <sup>5</sup> She shall be a drying place for nets in the midst of the sea. I have spoken, says the Lord GOD: and she shall be booty for the nations . . . <sup>7</sup> For thus says the Lord GOD: I am now bringing up against Tyre from the north Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, the king of kings, with horses and chariots, with cavalry and a great and mighty army. <sup>8</sup> Your daughters on the mainland he shall slay with the sword; He shall place a siege tower against you, cast up a ramp about you, and raise his shields against you . . . <sup>12</sup> Your wealth shall be plundered, your merchandise pillaged; Your walls shall be torn down, your precious houses demolished; Your stones, your timber, and your clay shall be cast into the sea. <sup>13</sup> I will put an end to the noise of your songs, and the sound of your lyres shall be heard no more. <sup>14</sup> I will make you a bare rock; a drying place for nets shall you be. Never shall you be rebuilt, for I have spoken, says the Lord GOD (Ezekiel 26).

Let's zero in on just six precise prophecies detailed here, some forty years prior to Daniel's prophecy about the exploits of Alexander:

- Many nations would attack Tyre (Ezekiel 26:3).
- The mainland city would be razed (Ezekiel 26:8).
- The city would be scraped down to bare rock (Ezekiel 26:4).
- Debris from the city would be thrown into the sea (Ezekiel 26:12).
- Fishermen would spread their fishing nets on the flat surface (Ezekiel 26:5).
- The city would never be rebuilt (Ezekiel 26:14).

All of this happened just as God said.

- Waves of nations did, in fact, attack this supposedly impregnable fortress. Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to the mainland city a mere three years after the prophecy. His siege to take the city took 13 years (585-573 B.C.)! When he entered the city the place was almost empty because the majority of the people had fled to the island fortress. Alexander became another wave to attack the city during his day some 242 years after Nebuchadnezzar. Later, the Moslems fortified the city, which caused the Crusaders to fight for it. They defeated the Moslems and used this fortress as a base for their military operations.
- Nebuchadnezzar razed the mainland city as prophesied.
- When Alexander attacked the island fortress, his troops scraped the debris of the mainland city, as prophesied, and threw it into the water, creating a causeway some 200 feet wide. Eventually, his troops used the causeway, plus ships they acquired from defeated foes of the area, to destroy the fortress of all fortresses . . . as prophesied.

- Fishermen today spread their nets on the bare rock of what used to be the city . . . as prophesied.
- The old city has never been rebuilt . . . as prophesied.

And Alexander was part of God's prophetic equation. He truly was unstoppable as a mighty ram's horn . . . as prophesied hundreds of years before the fact. After defeating Tyre (332 B.C.), Alexander next defeated Jerusalem (which surrendered peacefully), then he wiped out Gaza, and, then, Egypt, which grew weary of Persian rule, welcomed him and their priests crowned him as a Pharaoh with divine status (331 B.C.).

After this, the victorious young warrior marched back into Asia and completely routed the Persians, and in 331 he took Susa, then Persepolis and Ecbatana. In 327 he ventured into India, without the mental support of his tired troops, and he campaigned here until 325 B.C. In 324 B.C. he sent word back to the Greek states commanding them to recognize him as the god and son of Zeus-Ammon. Again, he fulfilled the prophecy of Daniel to the letter by magnifying himself in this fashion.

Eventually, Alexander wound back to Babylon where he partied himself into oblivion by drinking six quarts of wine at one party and then more at another party the next night. The wine, coupled with cold weather, proved to be his undoing. He contracted a severe fever, and after ten days of suffering, the thirty-three-year-old, once unstoppable ram's horn died 323 B.C., resulting in the immediate breakage of his horn . . . as prophesied in Babylon (of all places) some 224 years before.

And you say that being a Christian is all about blind faith. Think again, my friend. The prophetic evidence is verifiable and powerful, and it should move you, right now, from unbelief to belief, from being an object of God's judgment to being an object of His love and forgiveness.