



GOD SETS THINGS RIGHT



GOD SETS THINGS RIGHT

A good map shows us where we've been and how to get where we are going. A really good map helps us see the big picture while also tracing the important details. The prophecies we studied in Daniel 2 and 7 are a map of the future, showing the interaction of nations before they even existed. However, God's map of the future doesn't stop with the prediction of nations. In Daniel 8, God added a layer to His prophetic map that goes below the surface of kings and rulers. This detailed prophecy reveals the big picture of humanity's most urgent need: to set things right. In this lesson, we are introduced to Bible symbols filled with important details that show how God is setting things right. As you study, ask Him to teach you. This lesson builds upon what we learned in Lesson #18, so be sure to study that one first.

1 What similarities does the vision in Daniel 8 have with what Daniel saw in chapter 7?

Daniel 8:2 "... I saw in the vision that I was by the River Ulai."

Daniel's first vision took place by a large, unnamed body of water he called "the Great Sea" (Daniel 7:2); but now he sees a small, specifically named waterway. Daniel's second vision is not simply the same story with new images. In this vision, God narrows the focus to emphasize a specific message we need to understand.

Daniel 8:3–4 "... There, standing beside the river, was a ram which had two horns ... one was higher than the other ... pushing westward, northward, and southward ..."

Daniel 8:5, 8 "... A male goat came from the west, across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. ... The large horn was broken, and in place of it four notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven."

In both visions, animals represent the progression of human kingdoms. "The ram which you saw, having the two horns—they are the kings of Media and Persia. And the male goat is the kingdom of Greece..." (Daniel 8:20–21). Babylon was not shown because it was soon to be conquered, as God had promised (Daniel 2:39).

2 What followed the kingdoms represented by the ram and the goat?

Daniel 8:9 "And out of one of them came a little horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Glorious Land."

The conquering empire of Rome is briefly depicted by the initial appearance of the little horn, which came from a different direction than the previous kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece. Rome came from the northwest, out of one of "the four winds of heaven" (Daniel 8:8), and ruled over the land of Israel.

3 What astonishing actions become the focus of the vision of the ram, the goat, and the little horn?

Daniel 8:6–7 "Then he [the goat] came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing beside the river, and ran at him with furious power. And I saw him confronting the ram; he was moved with rage against him, attacked the ram, and broke his two horns. There was no power in the ram to withstand him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled him ..."

Daniel 8:10 “And it [the little horn] grew up to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and some of the stars to the ground, and trampled them.”

Two successive conflicts exploded before Daniel. First, the goat’s attack of the ram represented the conflict between human kingdoms. The Greek conquest led by Alexander the Great was rapid and complete, humbling their Medo-Persian rivals. However, the conflict of nations on Earth is just a small-scale illustration of the all-out war the little horn wages—not against an earthly kingdom, but against the host of Heaven. The angel Gabriel, who interpreted Daniel’s vision, explained that these are God’s holy people (Daniel 8:16, 24).



“Then he [the goat] came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing beside the river, and ran at him with furious power.” Daniel 8:6

4 Is the little horn the same religious power Daniel saw in chapter 7, verse 8?

The little horn first represents the mighty Roman Empire. But when it “grew up to the host of heaven” (Daniel 8:10), the Roman power transitions into a second phase which acts as a distinctly religious power. In both visions, kingdoms represented by animals are followed by the little horn. In both visions, the little horn opposes God (Daniel 7:25, 8:12) and God’s true followers (Daniel 7:25, 8:24). The little horn in both visions represents the same religious power.

(Exodus 25:9). The Sanctuary and its furnishings rested directly on the Earth and was positioned in the center of Israel’s families—assuring all that we can approach God for forgiveness from sin (Numbers 2:17). Priests carried the disassembled Sanctuary reverently as they traveled because God accompanies His people wherever He leads us (Numbers 10:21). The tangible object lessons in the Sanctuary teach helpless sinners that through Jesus we can be reunited with God to dwell with Him.

5 What target is the little horn power fixated on destroying?

Daniel 8:11 “He even exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host; and by him the daily sacrifices were taken away, and the place of His sanctuary was cast down.”

The vision turns our attention away from the history of nations to focus on a much greater spiritual conflict. In contrast with the ferocious beasts of the first vision, two very familiar animals briefly take center stage. A ram and a goat were presented as sacrifices for forgiveness in the Sanctuary (Leviticus 16:5). The Prince of the host is Jesus, Himself; and the Sanctuary with its sacrifices belongs to Him. Our attention is now fastened on God’s Sanctuary where the fight of all time is directed.

7 What was in the Sanctuary, and what does it teach about salvation through Jesus?

The Outer Court (Exodus 27:9–18) – Surrounded by a sea of travel-worn tents, a 7.5 foot tall pure linen curtain enclosed the Sanctuary courtyard, 150 feet long by 75 feet wide. It was a perpetual illustration of Jesus’ perfect righteousness compared to our sinfulness. “But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags ...” (Isaiah 64:6). Instead of turning sinners away because of unworthiness, God invited Israel to come toward the Sanctuary to learn about Jesus and be restored.

Bronze altar of burnt offering (Exodus 27:1–8) – Everything in the sanctuary started with the sacrifices that were presented on the altar inside the courtyard. The unblemished lambs offered as a sin offering represented Jesus, Who is sinless. To offer us forgiveness, He died on the Cross for our sins. Jesus is “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29), “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8).

6 What is God’s Sanctuary, and what is its purpose?

Exodus 25:1, 8 “Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: ‘... let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.’”

God’s Sanctuary, also called the tabernacle, was a simple, beautiful, two-room tent surrounded by a courtyard that God instructed Israel to build in Exodus 25–31. Every detail followed a precise pattern that God gave

Bronze laver (Exodus 30:17–21) – God’s promise goes beyond forgiveness. Washing in the basin represents spiritual cleansing in our daily lives that comes from Jesus’ death. With our cooperation, He cleanses the impure habits from our lives, so we are fit to work for God. We accept this

The Sanctuary



Outside the Tabernacle

- 1 The Outer Court
- 2 Bronze Altar of Burnt Offering
- 3 Bronze Laver

Inside the Tabernacle

- 4 Two-Compartment Tabernacle
- 5 Seven-branched Lampstand
- 6 Golden Table of Showbread
- 7 Golden Altar of Incense
- 8 Veil to Most Holy Place
- 9 Mercy Seat
- 10 Ark of the Covenant
- 11 Most Holy Place

promise through the symbol of baptism (Acts 22:16). “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

Two-compartment tabernacle (Exodus 26:1–37) – Partly visible to those standing outside the courtyard was the Sanctuary itself, 15 feet tall and wide, and 45 feet long. The first compartment was called The Holy Place, and the second, smaller room was The Most Holy (Exodus 26:33). The precious metals became increasingly more valuable approaching the Most Holy. Three items placed in The Holy Place illustrated the blessings we experience when we trust in Jesus each day for salvation:

One: Seven-branched lampstand (Exodus 25:31–40) – A golden lampstand was the Sanctuary’s only man-made source of light. It was beaten by a hammer into the shape of a blossoming olive tree, reminding us of Jesus taking the blows of sin in our place (Numbers 8:4). Jesus said, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life” (John 8:12). His perfect character radiates through the Christian’s life and blesses others. Jesus bids us, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). The lamps could only shine when they remained filled with oil. Likewise, we shine God’s light only when we are filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:31).

Two: Golden table of showbread (Exodus 25:23–30) – Stocked every Sabbath with twelve fresh loaves of bread and other provisions representing God’s constant care, this table illustrated Jesus’ promise for the Christian’s life: “... I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger ...”

(John 6:35). God’s provision goes beyond physical food. “... ‘Man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord’” (Deuteronomy 8:3). When we continually study the character of Jesus in the Bible, He sustains us and helps us to grow spiritually.

Three: Golden altar of incense (Exodus 30:1–10) – Here, incense burned continuously, filling the room and sending a sweet smell over the veil that opened to the Sanctuary’s inner compartment. The smoke from the incense represents Jesus’ sacrifice for our sins that rises “to God for a sweet-smelling aroma” (Ephesians 5:2). His sacrifice brings our prayers into God’s presence. “Let my prayer be set before You as incense ...” (Psalm 141:2). This altar was “most holy to the Lord” (Exodus 30:10) because prayer is essential to the Christian’s life. “Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us” (1 John 5:14). “Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered” (Romans 8:26).

The inner veil opening to the Most Holy Place (Exodus 26:31–33) – There was only one doorway to enter the courtyard, only one doorway to experience God’s blessing in the Sanctuary, and only one doorway to approach the Most Holy Place. Jesus said, “I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved ...” (John 10:9). The inner veil was made of fine linen (blue, purple, and red), embroidered with angels. The heavenly design demonstrated the beauty of Jesus’ righteousness. Only through their faith in Jesus can sinners approach God’s presence (Hebrews 10:19–20). “... ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me’” (John 14:6).

The Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat (Exodus 25:10–22) – Finally, beyond the first room of the Sanctuary was the Most Holy Place (or “Holiest



“... He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”
John 8:12

of All,” Hebrews 9:3). It contained a beautiful wooden box overlaid with gold called the Ark of the Covenant. Two gold cherubim on the Ark represented Heaven’s angels who obediently do God’s will. Inside the Ark was God’s unchanging Ten Commandment Law, written on stone (Exodus 31:18). The solid gold cover over the Ark of the Covenant was called the Mercy Seat. Its very name announces God’s offer of mercy through Jesus to all who have broken His Law.

The Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16) – When sinners confessed their sins, they had confidence that God had forgiven them. The Sanctuary even assured them that the record of their sins would be fully removed. The High Priest entered The Most Holy Place once a year on the Day of Atonement and would sprinkle the blood of a special sacrifice on the Mercy Seat to cleanse the Sanctuary. This pointed forward to the time when Jesus would permanently erase the record of confessed sins.

The garments and work of the priests (Exodus 28:1–43) – Even the priests’ clothing matched the colors and materials of the Sanctuary. By meticulously carrying out their ordained tasks, the priests demonstrated the message of the Sanctuary that all of salvation comes through trusting in Jesus!

8 What happened every day in the Sanctuary?

Exodus 29:38–39 “Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two lambs of the first year, day by day continually. One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight.”

Every task in the Sanctuary was connected to the sacrifice of innocent animals offered in place of sinners (Leviticus 6:9,13). Still, everyone knew that an animal’s death could never make up for even one person’s sin. “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins” (Hebrews 10:4). The sacrifices pointed forward to Jesus, Who experienced temptation as a man but did not sin (1 Peter 1:18–19). Only our sinless Creator could take our place, “so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many” (Hebrews 9:28). The Sanctuary symbols are a continual invitation to accept God’s priceless gift of salvation through Jesus.

9 Is the Sanctuary still on Earth where we can see it?

Hebrews 8:1–2 “... We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.”

Psalms 102:19 “For He looked down from the height of His sanctuary; from heaven ...”

| God’s True Sanctuary is in Heaven, the pattern Moses saw on the moun-

tain (Hebrews 8:5). All the symbols that pointed forward to Jesus were fulfilled by His life, death, resurrection, and ministry in Heaven; so a physical Sanctuary on Earth is no longer needed. Like the Sanctuary built on Earth, the Heavenly Sanctuary is all about Jesus. He is not only the True Sacrifice, Who took the penalty for our sins, but also our True High Priest in Heaven’s Sanctuary.

10 What help do we receive from Jesus, our High Priest?

Hebrews 4:14–16 “Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

Jesus, our True High Priest, gives us the forgiveness we cannot earn and the power to obey we cannot create (Matthew 19:26). “My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1). When we trust in Jesus as our Mediator in Heaven, He empowers us to resist every temptation. Unlike human priests, who pass away, Jesus lives forever. “Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 7:25).

11 Since the physical Sanctuary no longer exists on Earth, what is the little horn really fighting against?

Daniel 8:25 “... ‘He shall even rise against the Prince of princes ...’”

| The little horn’s true purpose is not to destroy a physical structure, but to undermine Jesus, “the Prince of princes,” because He is the focus and



“Jesus, our True High Priest, gives us the forgiveness we cannot earn ...”



“During the Dark Ages, truth was cast down when Christians were not allowed to read the Bible for themselves.”

theme of the Sanctuary. Psalm 77:13 says, “Your way, O God, is in the sanctuary.” Through the little horn, Satan has opposed God’s way of salvation through Jesus, which He teaches us through the symbols of the Sanctuary.

12 How did the little horn attack God’s Sanctuary in Heaven?

Daniel 8:12 “Because of transgression, an army was given over to the horn to oppose the daily sacrifices; and he cast truth down to the ground. He did all this and prospered.”

The little horn used military power to enforce church laws that prevented people from coming to Jesus directly for salvation.

- During the Dark Ages, truth was cast down when Christians were not allowed to read the Bible for themselves. Without access to God’s Word, salvation through Jesus alone was hidden from them. “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (Psalm 119:105).
- Rather than coming to Jesus directly, Christians were instructed to confess their sins to a human mediator to secure forgiveness. “For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5).
- Then, instead of trusting in the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross for salvation, sinners were taught they could earn salvation by obeying church rules, completing acts of penance, or by making special offerings. “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (Ephesians 2:8–9). The daily experience of trusting Jesus’ sacrifice was replaced by trusting in good works and human leaders.

13 Will God stop Satan’s attack against salvation through Jesus?

Daniel 8:13–14 “... ‘How long will the vision be, concerning the daily sacrifices and the transgression of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot?’ And he said to me, ‘For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed.’”

The Sanctuary must be cleansed, restored, and set right. To restore what has been trampled, God points us to the full truth about Jesus. We must learn about God’s Sanctuary in Heaven, about God’s unchanging Law, about salvation that cannot be earned by good behavior, and about God’s power to help us live free from sin. The errors that have replaced Bible truth must be corrected with love and kindness. The cleansing of the Sanctuary includes more than restoring a right understanding of salvation. It is the actual cleansing of sin that Jesus completes in the Heavenly Sanctuary and in our lives. For the full study of the cleansing of the Sanctuary, review Lesson #8 (“When All Is Said and Done”).

14 When would the “two thousand three hundred days” prophecy begin and end?

Daniel 8:26 “And the vision of the evenings and mornings which was told is true; therefore seal up the vision, for it refers to many days in the future.”

The prediction of 2,300 days referred to the distant future, but God did not indicate when the time would start. Daniel was desperate to know when and how God would keep His promise, and wrote: “...I, Daniel, fainted and was sick for days I was astonished by the vision, but no one understood it” (Daniel 8:27). The answer would come soon, in Daniel chapter 9. To learn about the timing of the 2,300 days and God’s cleansing of the Sanctuary, study Lesson #20, (“It All Adds Up”).



“The errors that have replaced Bible truth must be corrected with love and kindness.”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR MY LIFE TODAY?



1. A thief targets what is most valuable. Satan’s attack on God’s Sanctuary confirms that it is of highest value, and important for us to understand. How can the details you have learned about the Sanctuary help you trust Jesus more?

2. Consider the way into the Sanctuary: the opening to the courtyard was 30 feet wide and all were welcome to look inside. The opening into the Sanctuary, itself, was much narrower—just 15 feet wide. Jesus’ way is a narrow way (Matthew 7:13–14). When the narrow way requires you to let go of something that is not a blessing for your Christian life, how can you remember the reward that comes from choosing to walk in the narrow way?

3. There were four coverings over the Sanctuary (Exodus 26:1–14). The outermost was a waterproof, dark-colored animal skin, reminding us of the impenetrable darkness of sin. Beneath that was ram skin dyed red, showing that the first step to be free from sin is Jesus’ shed blood—His death that took our penalty. Next, there was goat skin, white from the tanning process, showing the purity of the Christian life Jesus enables us to live. And finally, there was the exquisite red, blue, and purple linen embroidered with gold angels, showing the blessing of being united with God. How can you describe these steps to someone who wants to know how to be close to God?

4. Who do you know that needs to hear what you have learned? “The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom, and his tongue talks of justice” (Psalm 37:30).

Additional Notes:

WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS FOR ME IN GOD'S SANCTUARY?



1. God will help us understand the lessons that are taught through His Sanctuary.

“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him” (James 1:5). “For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding” (Proverbs 2:6). “... He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding. He reveals deep and secret things ...” (Daniel 2:21-22).

2. When we study God's Sanctuary, we begin to understand His glorious plan to save us. “So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, to see Your power and Your glory” (Psalm 63:2).

3. Everything about God's Sanctuary is a blessing to be enjoyed. “For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness” (Psalm 84:10).

4. Salvation is not earned by our worthiness. It is God's demonstration of love through Jesus, Who died for us. “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).

5. The blessing of the Sabbath is an important part of God's Sanctuary. “You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary: I am the Lord” (Leviticus 19:30).

6. God will reveal Bible truth that has been hidden or misunderstood. “Therefore do not fear them. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known” (Matthew 10:26).

7. The Sanctuary assures us that God will dwell with His people forever. “And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God’” (Revelation 21:3).

LESSON SUMMARY

1. Daniel 8 delivers an important message about God's Sanctuary.

2. The Sanctuary teaches us many lessons about salvation, and that it comes through trusting in Jesus.

3. We should carefully study the symbols in the Sanctuary to accurately understand God's plan of salvation.

4. God's true Sanctuary is not on Earth, but in Heaven.

5. Jesus is both the True Sacrifice Who takes away sin, and our True High Priest, Who helps us in Heaven.

6. Through distorted religious teachings about salvation, Satan attempts to turn our attention away from Jesus.

7. God promised that at His appointed time, Jesus would cleanse the Sanctuary, and that the truths of the Sanctuary would be restored and taught clearly.

Additional Notes:
