

The Sanctuary and the Little Horn



SABBATH AFTERNOON

Read for This Week's Study: *Exod. 27:20; 29:42; Num. 4:7; 28:6; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:24-27; 8:1-5; 9:1-14, 24.*

Memory Text: “Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on 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 pitched, and not man” (*Hebrews 8:1, 2*).

In the past few weeks, we have seen the emphasis that Daniel 8 has placed on the little horn. Obviously, it's an issue of great importance, considering the prominence given not only to its description but also to its explanation later in the chapter.

This week we're going to look even more closely at the little horn, focusing specifically on its attack against the “prince of the host,” the “daily,” and “the place of his sanctuary.”

We're going to see, too, how central the idea of the heavenly sanctuary is to the chapter, for it's only in the context of the heavenly sanctuary and its services that we can get a better understanding of the little horn's assault.

This week's study also will help set the foundation for what will come later: a deeper look at the role of the sanctuary, and particularly its cleansing, in the context of the gospel and the entire plan of salvation, which, of course, leads into the great hope for all Christians everywhere: the second coming of Jesus.

**Study this week's lesson to prepare for Sabbath, September 9.*

“Even to the Prince of the Host”

Read Daniel 8:9-12, which focuses on the activity of the little horn. What are the specific things, according to the text, that the little-horn power does?

In an earlier lesson (week 5), we noticed how the direction of the little horn’s activity had shifted, first from a horizontal direction (*vs. 9*), which depicted a military or political expansion, to a vertical one (*vss. 10-12*), which revealed a religious dimension. This, we said, showed the two phases of Rome, first pagan, then papal.

Look again at the description of the little horn’s activities in verses 10-12. These actions, obviously, aren’t to be taken literally but symbolically. Without attempting to understand each symbol, what kind of action is being portrayed here? What kind of attack is the little horn launching?

Look at some of the key words seen in this attack: “host” (*Neh. 9:6, Luke 2:13*); “heaven” (*Matt. 6:1, Heb. 9:24*); “prince” (*Isa. 9:6, Dan. 12:1, Acts 3:15, 5:31*); “daily” (*Num. 4:16, 28:24, 29:6*); “sanctuary” (*Exod. 25:8; Heb. 8:1, 2*); “truth” (*Job 9:2, John 14:6, 1 Tim. 2:4, James 5:19*). All these words, filled with religious and spiritual meaning, are what come under attack by the little horn. Thus, more than anything else, it’s the religious attack by the little horn that plays great prominence here, and that’s the focus of the vision. The Lord wants us to see the religious dimension of the little horn and that its activities are in a religious sphere. This activity is seen again in the explanation in Daniel 8:23-25, in which the little horn specifically is said to persecute “the mighty and the holy people,” as well as to stand up against “the Prince of princes.”

In your own experience, what are the ways that your faith and beliefs have come under attack? Which has been the greatest challenge to you? What has been your most effective means of defense?

The Sanctuary

Compare the kind of beast-symbols found in Daniel 7 and in Daniel 8. What great difference do you see between them?

Not only are the beasts in Daniel 8 sanctuary animals, they are among the animals used on the Day of Atonement (*Leviticus 16*). This provides the first link to the book of Leviticus, which spends more time dealing with the sanctuary service than any other book in the Old Testament.

Read again Daniel 8:10-12 (see also vs. 13, 14). What is the center of the little horn's attack?

It's clear that the sanctuary is under attack.

First, the little horn takes away the "daily." The Hebrew word translated "daily" (*tamid*) also means "continual," or "perpetual," and it is used numerous times in direct reference to the day-by-day ministry of the priests in the first apartment of the earthly sanctuary service. This, then, is an unmistakable reference, not only to the sanctuary service but to the daily ministry in that service (see *Exod. 27:20, 29:42, Num. 4:7, 28:6*).

In Daniel 8:11, it said that the "place" or the "foundation" of His sanctuary was cast down. That word *place* is found in numerous texts, all in reference to the sanctuary, or to God's dwelling place, which also has a link to the sanctuary (*Exod. 15:17, 1 Kings 8:13, 2 Chron. 6:2, Isa. 18:4*).

Then there are, of course, the references to the "sanctuary" itself, found not only in verse 11 but also in verses 13 and 14. These verses alone show clearly how the sanctuary, which was the earthly model of the plan of salvation, was under attack.

Given the time frame of this phase of the little horn, which arose around the fifth century A.D., why can this not be an attack on the earthly sanctuary?

Because the earthly sanctuary had been destroyed in A.D. 70, this was an attack on the heavenly sanctuary. The little horn, of course, would not get into heaven, so this, instead, would have been an attack on all that was symbolized by the sanctuary, which is the plan of salvation. Thus, the little horn attacks not only God's people but the plan of salvation, as well.

The Attack

Daniel, more than five hundred years before Christ, is shown in vision the essence of Rome's later attack on "the truth," which it cast "to the ground" (*Dan. 8:12*). Among other things, the little horn waxes great, even against the "Prince of the host," Jesus.

At the time of Rome's attack, where was Christ, and what was He doing? *Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:24-27; 8:1-5; 9:11-14, 24.*

The little horn, as we saw, waxed great, even to the "Prince of the host," who is obviously Christ. Its attack, too, centered against not just the people of God but against the sanctuary and its foundation and services, in this case, specifically, the "daily" service.

It's very important to keep in mind that Christ, "the Prince of the host," is now ministering for us in the heavenly sanctuary, which is under attack by the little horn. Again, the language was symbolic; the little horn didn't actually get into heaven, any more than it physically cast the "truth" or the "place of his sanctuary" to the ground.

Thus, this attack by the little horn was also an attack on the plan of salvation, which began with the death of Christ (symbolized by the death of the animals in the sanctuary service), and which was followed by Christ's high-priestly ministry (symbolized by the ministry of the priesthood in the earthly service). Everything symbolized by that sanctuary has come under attack by the little horn.

How did it do this?

Christ is now our High Priest, interceding for us in the heavenly sanctuary. A careful study of the Roman system shows how the entire structure of the church, with its priesthood, mediation, and mass, usurps everything that Christ has done for us or is doing for us now. Everything that we as believers would attribute directly to God and Christ has been commandeered by the Roman Church itself, which according to the text "magnified itself" (*Dan. 8:11, RSV*), even to Christ Himself (see Friday's lesson).

What is the role of the organized church in the plan of salvation? How can you be an active participant in helping the church fulfill its role? At the same time, what are the limits of what the church can do for you in your walk with the Lord?

The “Daily”: Part 1

As you read about the little horn’s attack in Daniel 8:10-12 on the sanctuary, it says specifically that the little horn took away “the daily.” Though many translations in English supply the word “sacrifice” or “burnt offerings,” the text does not say that. Though this addition shows that translators were able to see the clear link with the sanctuary, the added word is not warranted. The word “daily” (see Monday’s lesson) dealt not just with the daily sacrifices but with the entire daily operations of the earthly sanctuary.

What part of the “daily” service (translated as “always,” “continual,” “perpetual”) is depicted in each of these texts? Also, in what part of the sanctuary are most of these activities taking place?

Exod. 25:30

Exod. 27:20

Exod. 30:8

Lev. 6:13

In these texts, the word *tamid* (translated “daily” or “the daily” in Daniel 8:11) modified each of these activities. Thus, though the *tamid* included the sacrifices, it included the day-by-day ministrations of the priesthood, which, according to the book of Hebrews, was just an “example and shadow of heavenly things” (*Heb. 8:5*). Those heavenly things, of course, were the spiritual realities of Christ’s high-priestly ministry; all these earthly activities, these shadows, were simply symbols of Christ ministering in the heavenly sanctuary in our behalf. Again, this is what has come under attack by the little horn.

Also notice, too, that these activities centered around the first apartment of the earthly sanctuary. The bread, the lampstand, and the incense were all in the first apartment; the sacrifice, of course, was at the altar outside it.

The important point, which will be seen later, is that none of the activities had anything to do with the Most Holy Place, the second apartment, which the high priest entered only once a year, when the sanctuary was cleansed.

What kind of “daily,” or “continual” activities are so important for your own spiritual growth? Why is the fact that they are done “daily” so important for that growth?

“The Daily”: Part 2

The earthly sanctuary service was a model of the heavenly; the sacrifices and the ministry of the priesthood were types, figures, mini-prophecies, as it were, of the death and high-priestly ministry of Jesus.

What does Hebrews 9:1-14 teach about the relationship between the earthly service and the heavenly one?

Students of the sanctuary service know that besides the daily ministration in the first apartment, once a year the high priest entered into the Most Holy Place to perform the “cleansing of the sanctuary” (*see Leviticus 16*). Because this happened only once a year, it’s often called “the yearly,” to contrast it with “the daily.” Hence, the entire sanctuary service could be placed broadly in two categories: the daily, first-apartment ministry, and the yearly, second-apartment ministry, during which the sanctuary was cleansed.

We’ve seen, too, that the little horn attacks the heavenly sanctuary, which was an attack on the plan of salvation itself. This, we believe, refers to the entire Roman Catholic system, which has usurped the role and prerogatives of God and Christ in the plan of salvation (see Friday’s lesson).

Now, an important question: Why was just the daily service, *the tamid*, specified as the object of the little horn’s attack? Why did the vision emphasize only one aspect of the sanctuary service, as opposed to both?

Read Daniel 8:14. How does this text help answer the above questions?

The little horn was able to attack only the “daily” because the “yearly,” the second-apartment ministry, which occurred when the sanctuary was cleansed, wasn’t in operation then. Not until the end of the 2,300 years, 1844, was the sanctuary to be cleansed and the “yearly” began.

Thus, in Daniel 8, both phases of Christ’s high-priestly ministry appear: “the daily,” which comes under attack by the little horn, and “the yearly,” which commences at the end of the 2,300 days. Both are brought to view in this chapter.

Imagine if every time you sinned, you had to sacrifice an innocent animal. What kind of lessons would that teach you about sin? Contrast the death of a goat to the death of the Son of God. What does His death tell us about the cost of sin? How seriously do you take sin in your own life?

Further Study: Below are quotes, all taken from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (New York: Doubleday, 1995). As you read, keep in mind Daniel 8:11, 12 and the little horn’s usurpation of what belonged only to God and Christ.

“The power to ‘bind and loose’ connotes the authority to absolve sins. . . . Jesus entrusted this authority to the Church through the ministry of the apostles.”—No. 553.

“As sacrament, the Church is Christ’s instrument. ‘She is taken up by him also as the instrument for the salvation of all,’ ‘the universal sacrament of salvation.’”—No. 776.

“It is in the Church that ‘the fullness of the means of salvation’ has been deposited.”—No. 824.

“Basing itself on Scripture and Tradition, the Council teaches that the Church, a pilgrim now on earth, is necessary for salvation.”—No. 846.

“The Church is catholic: she proclaims the fullness of the faith. She bears in herself and administers the totality of the means of salvation.”—No. 868.

“There is no offense, however serious, that the Church cannot forgive.”—No. 982.

“Were there no forgiveness of sins in the Church, there would be no hope of eternal life. Let us thank God who has given his Church such a gift.”—No. 983.

“By Christ’s will, the Church possesses the power to forgive the sins of the baptized.”—No. 986.

“Through the liturgy Christ, our redeemer and high priest, continues the work of our redemption in, with, and through His Church.”—No. 1096.

“Baptism is birth into the new life in Christ. In accordance with the Lord’s will, it is necessary for salvation, as is the Church herself, which we enter by Baptism.”—No. 1277.

Discussion Questions:

- 1** How do these quotes help us better understand the little horn’s usurpation of what belongs only to God?
- 2** As a class, discuss the question at the end of Tuesday’s lesson. What is the role of the church in the plan of salvation; what are the limits in what it can do for us? Why is the church a means to an end but not an end in itself?

The Strange Illness

Irina Polushkina

Irina grew up in an atheist home in the Ukraine. Shortly after her second child was born, she began to suffer severe back pain. The pain increased daily, and Irina lost several inches in height as her spine deteriorated. Her doctor was puzzled and could do little more than give her pain medication. She would have committed suicide, but the sight of her children's sweet faces kept her alive.

Her brother visited her and was horrified to see that his once-beautiful sister had lost her hair, her teeth, and her fingernails. "You came too late," Irina told her brother. "No one can help me."

"No, there is one Physician who can heal you," he replied, "and that is God. You do not have to leave home to consult Him, for you can speak to Him through prayer."

Irina was surprised at her brother's words, for he had been a strong Communist. But she listened as he explained that Jesus had created the world and cared for her. He gave her a New Testament and urged her to read it and to pray.

Irina found the New Testament hard to understand. She could not kneel to pray, so she lay on the floor and prayed, "If You love me, turn Your face to me and let me be healthy again."

Slowly Irina began to recover, and after 18 months she was well enough to return to work. She and her husband continued searching for God. They tried several churches but did not feel comfortable in any of them.

When Irina enrolled in a sewing class, she sat next to a woman who talked about God. Irina was eager to hear all this woman had to say. After class Irina asked the woman, "How can I find the truth?" The woman advised her to let the Bible lead her to the true church, which would follow all of God's commandments.

The next week Irina stayed after class to learn more. Her new friend talked about the Sabbath. Irina had never heard of the Sabbath before. Irina accepted her new friend's invitation to evangelistic meetings in a house church. Though the church was small, the people welcomed her warmly. Irina took some literature home to study with her husband. The couple attended the meetings together, and today they are members of the Adventist Church.

Part of a recent Thirteenth Sabbath Offering helped provide a new church in Irina's city. She and her fellow Adventists say "Thank you!"

Irina Polushkina lives in Sumy, Ukraine.