

SATAN'S COUNTERFEIT OF CHRIST'S HEAVENLY MINISTRY

Introduction In Lesson 25 we learned that the Heavenly ministry of Christ as our great High Priest is the "sum" of the Book of Hebrews, and the vital heart of the Christian faith (Heb. 8:1, 2).

Jesus is the "new and living Way" into the presence of God (Heb. 10:19-22). He is the "one Mediator" between God and men (1 Tim. 2:5). He is the "Author and Finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12:2). He is the Living Ladder between earth and Heaven (John 1:51). All our prayers and entreaties ascend to God through Him, and all Divine gifts and graces flow from God to us through Him. In place of priests, temples, altars, sacrifices and ceremonies, He substitutes Himself as the only "Way" of saving access to God (John 14:6).

So vital is this truth concerning the saving ministry of Christ that to remove it would be as disastrous as to remove the hub from a wheel; the keystone from an arch; the sun from the solar system, or the heart from the body!

Question: All this being true, what attitude would we expect Satan to take towards the heavenly ministry of Christ?

Answer: An attitude of ruthless opposition. A settled determination to pervert, counterfeit or obscure this truth, so as to render it powerless for the mass of mankind.

God has foreseen this Satanic opposition, and forewarned us against it. Satan's counterfeit of the Heavenly ministry of Christ is the subject of the prophecy of Daniel 8. Because it is impossible to do justice to this chapter in one Bible lesson, we will commence it now and complete it in Lessons 27 and 28.

Discussion First of all, let us look briefly at the whole chapter, which divides naturally into four parts:

What Daniel saw (vv 1-12).

What Daniel heard (vv 12, 13).

The interpretation begun by Gabriel (vv 15-25).

The interpretation interrupted and left unfinished (vv 26, 27).

Now let us look more closely at the vision itself, which also divides into four parts:

1.—THE RAM — SYMBOL OF MEDO-PERSIA (vv 3, 4, with v 20)

(See first section of Chart No. 33)

We have met this coalition of two nations before, in Daniel 2 and 7. Note the fact that this power became "great".

2.—THE HE-GOAT — SYMBOL OF GREECE (vv 5-8, with v 21)

(See second section of Chart No. 33)

We have also met this power in Daniel 2 and 7. Note the fact that this nation became "very great".

The "notable horn" which was broken, applies unquestionably to Alexander the Great. This dynamic young conqueror and ardent spreader of Greek culture was the "first" in importance of all the Greek warrior-kings. His military campaigns were noted for their surprise tactics, audacity, and remarkable swiftness of manoeuvre. After conquering Persia and almost all of the ancient world, Alexander died in Babylon at the early age of 32, as the result of a drunken orgy.