

## **Daniel 8 -- A Great Crisis Predicted**

As we have seen, each of the visions described in Daniel 2 and 7 pictures the successive rise of four kingdoms, followed by their complete destruction and replacement by a universal kingdom of righteousness. Daniel 7 gave further details at a number of points and made an important addition by predicting that God's people would face a great crisis during the latter part of the life of the fourth kingdom. This crisis would be produced by the rise of a "little horn that had eyes and a mouth that spoke boastfully," which would be "waging war against the saints and defeating them, until the Ancient of Days came." Then the saints would be given the kingdom.

At first sight there is considerable similarity between this part of Daniel 7 and the principal subject of Daniel 8, which also describes a great crisis in which God's people would face terrible calamities, a crisis which would also be caused by the activity of a "horn." The question naturally arises whether the two chapters describe the same crisis. Indeed such a conclusion lies at the center of the theory presented by Porphyry and held by liberal critics today. This view, which we have called the Maccabean interpretation, holds that the book was not written in the time of Nebuchadnezzar but about 350 years later, during the latter part of the Hellenistic kingdom, and that the purpose of the entire book was to prepare God's people for the great crisis described in detail in chapter 8. Those who believe that the book was written in the time of Nebuchadnezzar readily