

Dan. 8:1 In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, *even unto me Daniel*, after that which appeared unto me at the first.

The vision given Daniel in this chapter occurred approximately two years after the one in chapter 7.

Dan. 8:2 And I saw in a vision; and it came to pass, when I saw, that I *was* at Shushan *in* the palace, which *is* in the province of Elam; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai.

When Daniel saw this vision, he was at the palace in Shushan (Susa in Greek) in Elam, or Persia, today known as Iran. (Evidently his position required that he travel from time to time, since he obviously wasn't around for the events that caused Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to be thrown into the fiery furnace related in chapter 3 or he would have been thrown in with them.) Nehemiah served in this palace and Queen Esther lived here. Shushan is directly east of Babylon.

Nehemiah 1:1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah. And it came to pass in the month Chisleu, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace....

Esther 1:2 That in those days, when the king Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom, which was in Shushan the palace....

Verse 27 indicates that Daniel was in Shushan on business for the king.

In his vision Daniel saw himself by the river of Ulai.

Dan. 8:3 Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had *two* horns: and the *two* horns *were* high; but one *was* higher than the other, and the higher came up last.

As Daniel looked, he saw a ram with two high horns; the second horn grew to become the highest horn. In the Hebrew the horn represents power; the height seems to indicate the amount of power. The interpretation of the dream is going to be given by the angel Gabriel (v16).

Dan. 8:4 I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither *was there any* that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great.

Dan. 8:5 And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat *had* a notable horn between his eyes.

Dan. 8:6 And he came to the ram that had *two* horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power.

Dan. 8:7 And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground,

and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand.

“choler” = bitterness, sorely grieved, provoked

Dan. 8:8 Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven.

Dan. 8:9 And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant *land*.

Dan. 8:10 And it waxed great, *even* to the host of heaven; and it cast down *some* of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them.

Dan. 8:11 Yea, he magnified *himself* even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily *sacrifice* was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down.

Dan. 8:12 And an host was given *him* against the daily *sacrifice* by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered.

Commentary provided in conjunction with the explanation by Gabriel in the verses below.

Dan. 8:13 Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain *saint* which spake, How long *shall* be the vision concerning the daily *sacrifice*, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?

Dan. 8:14 And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.

I can only rely on the commentaries concerning these verses. Many seem to reference the 2300 days spoken of here as applying to the times of Antiochus Epiphanes and the duration of his influence regarding the temple sacrifices. In doing so, they have to count back from the time of the temple’s cleansing by Judas Maccabaeus in December 164 BC to determine when the sacrifices at the temple were stopped. They even disagree as to whether it is speaking of 2300 days or 1150 days (with reference to two sacrifices a day, evening and morning).

“How long shall be the vision...” – One morning while listening to the scripture, it occurred to me that the 2300 days referenced the length of time that the temple would exist during the tribulation, or Daniel’s 70th week (a total of 2520 days). It would allow for just over 7 months to build the temple after the signing of the 7-year covenant referenced in 9:27. It is interesting to me that verse 11 references the “place” of his sanctuary, and verses 13&14 reference the sanctuary. When I looked up “place,” it made reference to the foundation. The word for “cleansed” makes reference to moral cleansing and being turned to righteousness. When the Messiah returns to establish His Kingdom, both the land and the temple foundation will be purified in preparation for the building of the millennial temple and the establishment of His throne.

Zechariah 6:12-13 And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.

Recently (9/14), I read that Chaim Richman of the Temple Institute said that the temple could be built in less than a year (<http://kenraggio.com/KRPN-TheThirdTemple.htm>).

Dan. 8:15 And it came to pass, when I, *even* I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man.

Dan. 8:16 And I heard a man's voice between *the banks of Ulai*, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this *man* to understand the vision.

Dan. 8:17 So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end *shall be* the vision.

It would seem that Daniel sees a figure that resembles a man and hears another voice give instruction to the man that Daniel sees, identified as Gabriel, to explain the dream to Daniel. This is the first time in scripture that an angel is named.

Daniel fell to the ground in fear when Gabriel approached him. This would seem to indicate that although he looked like a man, there must have been something “unreal” or supernatural about him that caused Daniel to fear.

Gabriel tells Daniel that what he saw was concerning “the time of the end.” The word for *end* includes the idea of “extremity,” so I would phrase that as *at the end of time*. It conveyed to Daniel that it would be *after* his lifetime.

Dan. 8:18 Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: but he touched me, and set me upright.

This verse seems to indicate that when Daniel fell to his face in the previous verse, he had actually passed out—“he was in a deep sleep.” As he began talking to Daniel, Gabriel had awakened Daniel by picking him up.

Dan. 8:19 And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end *shall be*.

“end” = the last or end, the future, posterity, (latter) end (time)

“indignation” = fury (especially God’s displeasure with sin)

Gabriel is basically telling Daniel that he is going to explain to him what is going to happen in the last days on earth before Jesus the Messiah comes to reign as

King, the time of God's wrath on the wicked, that time being already fixed in the plan of God.

Dan. 8:20 The ram which thou sawest having *two* horns *are* the kings of Media and Persia.

This explanation goes with verses 3 and 4 above. The Medo-Persian Empire seemed to be invincible as it continued to expand its control. One commentary (JFB) made the following comparison: "The "one horn higher than the other" answers to the bear "raising itself *on one side*."

I think this is a direct reference to the ruling authority exerted by the combined kingdom. I think the highest horn represents Persia since they occupied the kingship for the longest period of time.

Adam Clarke makes note that the ram was the symbol of the Persians and that their empire was expanded through wars to the west, north and south as stated in verse 4. "The principal theater of their wars, says Calmet, was against the Scythians, northward; against the Greeks, westward; and against the Egyptians, southward."

Interesting observations from Joe Focht:

- Babylon divided their kingdom and named them after signs in the zodiac. Persia was named after Aires the Ram; and Macedonia (Greece) was named after Capricorn the goat.
- The Persians wore helmets with two rams horns when going into battle.

Dan. 8:21 And the rough goat *is* the king of Grecia: and the great horn that *is* between his eyes *is* the first king.

This verse seems to be the main point of verses 5-7. Earlier verses tell us that this he goat conquered with great speed—his feet "touched not the ground." Research indicates that he was prompted to attack when the Medo-Persian ruler started invading the territories of Greece. The *great horn* of the he goat is representative of Alexander the Great. Alexander and his armies came against Medo-Persia swiftly and powerfully and achieved great victory (v7) as noted in the previous chapter.

Again, Adam Clarke supplies more information: "...a goat was a very proper symbol of the Grecian or Macedonian people. Newton very properly observes that, two hundred years before the time of Daniel, they were called Aegeadae, the goats' people...."

Dan. 8:22 Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.

This verse corresponds to verse 8. History tells us that Alexander died in Babylon of a fever soon after he had established a great empire. Since Alexander

died without an heir (“not in his power”), his kingdom was divided among four of his generals.

- Seleucus = Syria, Israel, Babylonia, and Media
- Cassander = Macedonia and Greece
- Ptolemy = Egypt, Cyprus, and parts of Asia Minor
- Lysimachus = Thrace, Lydia, Cappadocia, and the northern parts of Asia Minor

Joe Focht made an interesting observation. He noted that because of Alexander, Koine Greek became the universal language throughout the world. He was also responsible for the building of thousand of miles of paved roads throughout his empire. These two things greatly facilitated the spread of the gospel by the apostles throughout the early church.

Dan. 8:23 And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.

Dan. 8:24 And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.

Dan. 8:25 And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify *himself* in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.

I think it is important to understand that Gabriel is interpreting Daniel’s dream. Verses 20-22 interpret verses 3-8; verses 23-25 interpret verses 9-12.

Because of the phrase “in the latter time of their kingdom” (v23), most commentators equate this king with Antiochus Epiphanes of the Seleucid kingdom, a type of the last “Antichrist” who will rise to power during the tribulation. I agree that Antiochus is a type of the Antichrist; however, I believe that the primary reference is to Antichrist.

I agree that verse 9 seems to be specifically referring to Antiochus...

“And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land.”

...however, the context of his interpretation seems to indicate that Gabriel is looking past the type to the antitype. Maybe the Antichrist will rise to power in like manner. Considering all that is taking place in that part of the world today (9/14), that makes sense to me.

It is also interesting to me to note that the little horn arises from the Greek empire. Considering the fact that Antiochus is an obvious type of Antichrist, this could also be a clue as to the area from which Antichrist will emerge. Since this area was absorbed by the Roman Empire, he would be considered a Roman as

well in connection with Daniel's prophecy in chapter 9. In that chapter Gabriel describes the Antichrist as coming from the people that destroy Jerusalem and the temple—the Romans.

*Daniel 9:26 "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself; and **the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary...."***

In the explanation of the 70 weeks determined upon Daniel's people, the Jews, (chapter 9) one of the reasons given for that period of 70 weeks is "to finish the transgression and to make an end of sins" (9:24); this would correspond to the phrase "when the transgressors are come to the full." I do not think this description applies to Antiochus. The wickedness of man will reach its zenith under the rule of Antichrist.

That he will be a "king of fierce countenance" (v23) describes Antichrist as strong, greedy and powerful according to the Hebrew. This was also true of Antiochus.

V23 "understanding dark sentences" – The Hebrew indicates that this man will be able to answer hard questions and an expert at trickery and riddles. I think this refers specifically to Antichrist who is indwelt by the father of lies and master of deceit. Antiochus may have tried to present himself in a positive light at first, but he was quickly revealed to be a tyrant. What you saw was what you got; no trickery attempted.

V24 "his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power" – I believe this is another phrase that points directly to Antichrist. He is given his power by the dragon, Satan.

*Revelation 13:2 "And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and **the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.**"*

*Revelation 12:9 "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the **Devil, and Satan**, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."*

V24 "he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people" – The Hebrew for "wonderfully" references the use of miracles. This too applies only to the Antichrist who will be able to perform "lying wonders."

*2 Thessalonians 2:8–10 "And then shall that Wicked be revealed...Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan **with all power and signs and lying wonders**, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved."*

Even the false prophet and some of the devils that serve him will be allowed to work miracles.

*Revelation 13:11–14 “And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. **And he doeth great wonders**, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, **And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast”***

*Revelation 16:14 “For they are the spirits of devils, **working miracles**, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”*

It will appear that Antichrist is winning since he will be allowed to destroy the mighty and the holy people of God.

*Revelation 13:7 “And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and **to overcome them**: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.”*

V25 “through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand” – “Policy” is a reference to intelligence and success. This is definitely applicable to Antichrist and I guess Antiochus to a lesser degree. “Craft” is again a reference to his skill in deceit as addressed above.

V25 “he shall magnify himself in his heart” – This leader is described as full of pride and I think can be truthfully applied to both Antiochus and Antichrist.

V25 “by peace he shall destroy many” – I believe this specifically applies to Antichrist. We know that he comes to power by confirming a covenant of peace with Israel and being lauded as a peacemaker worldwide. His true character will eventually be revealed and the “man of peace” will prove to be a megalomaniac.

Gabriel seems to disregard v10: “*And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them.*”

We know that Satan drew a third of the hosts of heaven with him when he fell. When Satan is cast down from heaven, he indwells the Antichrist.

Revelation 12:4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth....

Revelation 12:9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

The word “stamped” (v10) indicates abuse and oppression. I would take that to mean that he rules his forces with an iron fist so to speak.

V25 “he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes” corresponds with “he magnified himself even to the prince of the host” – Again, I believe this is specific to Antichrist. There is no question that Jesus is the Prince of princes. The “prince of the host” is a reference to Jesus as Commander in Chief of the angelic forces.

One way Antichrist stands up against Jesus is to put an end to daily sacrifice in the temple (v11); this is also true of Antiochus. Research indicates that “a host,” a group of those in the land of the sanctuary, Israel, decided to make league with Antiochus and establish their own practices as foretold in verse 12.

“And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered.”

We know that Antichrist will do this specifically 3.5 years after signing the covenant that allows the temple to be rebuilt and the sacrificial system reinstated.

Daniel 9:27 “And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease....”

V11 “the place of his sanctuary was cast down” – The word *his* is not in the Hebrew. The sanctuary is referencing the temple as indicated by the reference to daily sacrifices.

History records that Antiochus desecrated the temple by offering a pig on the altar and placing a statue of Zeus there. Antichrist will desecrate the temple by declaring himself God and placing his throne there.

2 Thessalonians 2:4 “Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.”

Notice that verse 12 emphasizes that his acts “cast down truth to the ground.” Those that follow Antichrist have chosen to reject Jesus, to reject the truth. Jesus foretold this very thing.

John 5:43 “I am come in my Father’s name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.”

As did the Apostle Paul.

*2 Thessalonians 2:8–10 “And then shall that Wicked be revealed...Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; **because they received not the love of the truth**, that they might be saved.”*

V25 “broken without hand” – This is true of both Antiochus and Antichrist. Antiochus died as a result of an intestinal infection, not as a result of war or the

action of any man. Antichrist is destroyed by the supernatural power of Christ, not by the hand of man.

2 Thessalonians 2:8 "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming...."

Dan. 8:26 And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it *shall be* for many days.

Evidently, Daniel's vision lasted for a day; so it would seem that he was probably summarizing in writing what he saw. The Hebrew for "shut thou up" indicates to keep secret. Why should he keep it secret? Because it didn't apply to those living at that time; it was about the end times, as stated in verses 17 and 19.

Dan. 8:27 And I Daniel fainted, and was sick *certain* days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it.

After seeing the vision, Daniel fainted and got sick (weak, afflicted, grieved) for several days. When he regained his strength, he resumed his duties for the king. The word "it" is not in the Hebrew. I think it is a bad addition. Daniel was astonished (stupefied, stunned) at what he had seen. Evidently, his thoughts were reflected in his countenance and/or actions, and people didn't understand why he looked or acted like he did. He was told to keep the vision secret; and based on his character throughout the rest of the book, I do not believe he shared it with others at that time. He was obviously led by the Spirit to write what he had seen for the benefit of those who would live in "the time of the end."

It's interesting that the focus of this vision is said to be for the end times, yet it seems to be discussing Medo-Persia and Greece. This all leads me to believe that there is more to be found in this narrative regarding Antichrist, in particular, and end time events.

I was recently (2004) reading a book by Arthur Pink, and he made reference to a verse that I think provides insight here.

Ecclesiastes 1:9 The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.

I'm understanding more and more that there are many layers of application in scripture—especially in the study of prophecy.

See Topical Study, "Antichrist per Daniel 11" that traces the history of Antichrist based on the type of Antiochus Epiphanes.