

Daniel, Chapter Eight - A Paraphrase

Dan 8:1 In the third year of Prince Belshazzar's reign over Babylon, I, Daniel, had another vision. The year was approximately 550 B.C.

Dan 8:2 In my vision, I saw myself being transported both in space and time to a large palace in the city of Suza, in the province of Elam. In the vision, I was standing beside the Ulai Canal.

Dan 8:3 I, Daniel, looked up, and there before me was a ram (Medo-Persia) with two horns. The horns of the ram were long, but one of the horns (Persia) was much longer than the other. Somehow I knew the longer horn grew up out of the ram's head after the shorter horn (Medes).

Dan 8:4 I watched as the ram charged first toward the west, then the north and finally to the south. Strangely, the animal did not charge to the east. The ram was extremely powerful and dominant. There was nothing that could stand before him. All that got in his way succumbed to the ram's power. The dominant ram did as he pleased and became great.

Dan 8:5 As I was pondering what I had seen, a large male goat (Grecian Empire) suddenly appeared, with a prominent horn (Alexander) between his eyes. The goat had come from the west; I could see him bounding quickly across the whole earth. The goat moved with purpose and alacrity; so quick was his pace that his feet did not touch the ground.

Dan 8:6 The two-horned ram was still standing beside the canal outside the city of Suza. The goat, without breaking stride, suddenly charged in a fit of rage.

Dan 8:7 The large male goat attacked the ram, shattering the ram's two horns. The defenseless ram was powerless to stand against the goat. The ram tried to fight back, but the goat repeatedly knocked him to the ground. No one could rescue the ram from the power of the goat.

Dan 8:8 The male goat became the leader of a formidable empire, but at the height of his power, on a return trip from conquering Pakistan, the large horn, representing Alexander the Great, was broken off, and in its place four prominent horns grew up. These four horns represented four generals who took over from Alexander. The goat's kingdom was divided among the four. The four were Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy and Seleucus.

Dan 8:9 From one of the horns, the horn of Seleucus, came an infamous horn, Antiochus Epiphanes. He started small but grew in power to the south, to the east and toward the land of Israel. Antiochus reigned from c. 175 B.C. to c. 164 B.C.

Dan 8:10 The horn grew until it reached the heavens, representing the meteoric rise to power of Epiphanes. The horn soon began a systematic persecution of God's people in the land that God had given Israel.

Dan 8:11 The horn, Antiochus Epiphanes from the line of Seleucus, thought of himself as the Lord God. In Israel he stopped all worship in the Temple. He even stopped the daily sacrifices and desecrated the Temple with, first, the blood of pigs and later the blood of Jewish children. Antiochus Epiphanes was a type of Antichrist to come.

Dan 8:12 Under the permissive will of God, Antiochus dominated Israel. He took complete charge of the Temple liturgy, demanding Israel worship the Greek pantheon. For a time, he prospered in everything he did. His ultimate demeaning of Israel and Jehovah God came when he had pig blood smeared in the Holy of Holies.

Dan 8:13 I heard one of the angels say to an angel standing nearby, "How long will it take for this awful vision to be fulfilled? When will the vision concerning the cessation of the daily sacrifice, the desolation of the Temple and the surrender of the sanctuary to foreigners come to pass?"

Dan 8:14 The angel turned to me, as though I had asked the question. "It will take twenty-three hundred days from the desecration of the Temple until its cleansing. "I, Daniel, thought long and hard as to the meaning of the twenty-three hundred days.

Dan 8:15 While I was trying to understand the meaning of the vision, I suddenly saw the figure of a man standing in front of me. He looked like a man, although he could have been an angel, or a Theophany.

Dan 8:16 I heard another man call from across the river, "Gabriel, tell Daniel the meaning of the vision."

Dan 8:17 Gabriel walked toward me. As he approached, I was too frightened to stand. I fell flat on my face. "Son of man," he said, "you must understand that the events you have seen in your vision will not take place until the last days."

Dan 8:18 Strangely enough, while on the ground I passed out. Gabriel revived me with a touch. He assisted me to my feet.

Dan 8:19 "I am here," he said, "to tell you what is going to happen during the Great Tribulation. What you saw pertains to the final events of planet earth."

Dan 8:20 I was told the two-horned ram represented the kings of Media and Persia.

Dan 8:21 The goat, with the large horn, was said to represent the king of Greece, and the large horn between his eyes represented the first king, Alexander the Great.

Dan 8:22 The four horns that replaced the one broken off represent four kingdoms that will emerge from Alexander's Greece; the four, will not, however, be as powerful as Alexander.

Dan 8:23 Now at the end of the reign of the four Greek kings, when the gentile world has become particularly morally rotten, a very angry king shall rise to power. His name historically is Antiochus Epiphanes, a type of Antichrist; he will be very shrewd, cruel and intelligent, just as will his final gentile successor, the Antichrist of the Tribulation.

Dan 8:24 Both Antiochus and the Antichrist will become very strong, but not by their own power. Each will be indwelt by Satan. Both will cause terrible devastation and will succeed for a short time. They will attempt to destroy God's people, Israel.

Dan 8:25 Each will cause deceit to prosper, and both will consider themselves superior, not only to other men, but each will think himself greater than God. They will destroy many and take a stand against God Himself. Yet both will fail. Antiochus will be defeated by the Maccabees and the Antichrist will be destroyed by Christ at His Second Advent.

Dan 8:26 “The vision given you is true, but keep it to yourself, for it concerns the distant future.”

Dan 8:27 I, Daniel, was absolutely exhausted, and for several days I retired to my bed, too sick to perform my duties. After I recovered, I went back to work as the king's chief administrator; however, I continued to anxiously ponder the vision. The whole prophecy was beyond my understanding.