

## The time periods of Daniel (2)

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**I**N [PART 1](#) of this article we looked at the time periods of Daniel 12 and 7. In Part 2 we look at the 2,300 period in Daniel 8 and the [2,520 period of Daniel 4](#), and conclude with a [table](#) summarising all our suggested interpretations.

### The 2,300 days of Daniel 8

An interesting connection exists between the Olivet Prophecy and the 2,300 Days Prophecy of Daniel 8. In Daniel 8:11-14 we read:

“Yea, he [the Roman power] 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. 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. 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? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed”.

On the basis of the day-for-a-year principle, 2,300 days represents 2,300 years. The 2,300 days refers to the time that the *sanctuary* and the *host* were to be trodden underfoot. What are the sanctuary and the host? To answer this question we need to look at what the prophecy is about.

At the beginning of the prophecy Daniel sees a goat racing to lock horns with a ram. The goat has a single horn and the ram two horns. The ram is vanquished and the goat continues on its expansive career. In time, the single horn of the goat is broken, and four other horns spring up in its place. One of these four horns sprouts another horn, which becomes “exceeding great” and dominates the south and east portions of the goat’s territory and “the pleasant land”. Further on in Daniel 8, the identity of the ram and goat are clearly revealed: “The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king” (vv. 20,21).

Carved gen featuring a two-horned ram and a single-horned goat



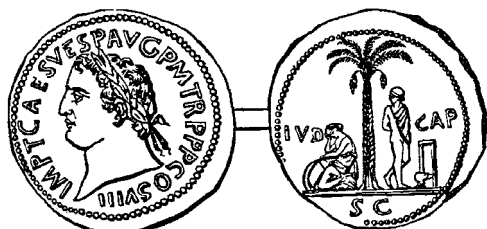
The “first king” was Alexander the Great, who conquered the Persian Empire in just ten years. He died in Babylon at the relatively young age of thirty-two, apparently due to excess alcohol. Subsequent to Alexander’s death, the Greek Empire was divided into four territories, each of which was ruled by one of Alexander’s generals. The Roman Empire grew out of one of these territories.

The way the symbols of the vision are structured leads us to the conclusion that it is the Roman power which is responsible for removing the daily sacrifice and treading the sanctuary and host underfoot. Without going into a lot of detail, it would seem reasonable to conclude that the



Relief from the Arch of Titus built to commemorate his victory over Jerusalem.

events of the vision symbolise the destruction of Judea by the Roman legions in A.D. 70. In A.D. 70 the temple was burned to the ground, and from thereon at least some of Jerusalem was ruled by foreign powers until 1967.



**Medal of Vespasian commemorating the capture of Jerusalem.**

When the Jewish nation came to an end in A.D. 70, it was already under the domination of the Romans, and before that, of the Greeks, Persians and Babylonians. However, it was the Romans who trod Jerusalem underfoot and dispersed most of the population.

The question is, how do the 2,300 years fit in? In the vision, Daniel is listening to a conversation between at least two angels. One of the angels asks an angel called "that certain saint [mg. Palmoni]" a question: "How long shall be the vision concerning the daily . . . ?" (v. 13). One possibility is that the 2,300 years commence from the date of the first event recorded in the vision, that is, when the goat and ram lock horns.

When we look at history, for example by using *The Times Atlas of World History*, we find that Alexander crossed from Greece to Asia Minor in 334 B.C. This event is symbolised by the goat flying over a river from the west. When we add 2,300 years onto 334 B.C. we arrive at 1967. As we have already seen in [Part 1](#) in relation to the 1,335 years of Daniel 12:12, 1967 was a highly significant year, as this was the year that the Jews gained control over all of their capital city Jerusalem, as mentioned in Luke's record of the Olivet Prophecy: "and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (21:24).<sup>1</sup>

#### **The seven times of Daniel 4**

The seven times (2,520 years) of Daniel 4:16,25 is the longest prophetic time period mentioned in Daniel, and indeed in all Scripture. This time period is mentioned in relation to the cutting down of the Babylonian tree and the placing of a band

of brass and iron on the stump. Although there will be debate about the precise dates involved, there can be little doubt that the 2,520 years stretch from the period of the seventy years' captivity to the end of the Gentile domination of Israel.

Adding 2,520 years to the date of the re-dedication of Solomon's temple in 517 B.C. brings us to 2004, when the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat passed off the scene. Several news reports have mentioned that Arafat was a major obstacle to peace over several decades, but now that he has gone the prospects are much better. For example, in August–September 2005 Israel pulled out of the Gaza Strip. In time, it is possible that the wall being built around the West Bank will be removed in dramatic fulfilment of Ezekiel 38:11: "and thou [Gog] shalt say, I will go up to the land of un-walled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates".

One objection to this interpretation might be, How could the death of an individual be so important? However, as we showed in [Part 1](#) in



**Pope John Paul II and Yasser Arafat get together in one of their meetings.**

relation to the 1,335 years of Daniel 12:12, there is a precedent for this; the death of Mohammed initiated the Islamic conquests.

#### **Conclusion**

Although we cannot be dogmatic about these dates, we are able to demonstrate that the time

1. It is, of course, highly appropriate that the part of the Olivet Prophecy which talks about the time when Jerusalem would no longer be ruled by Gentiles should occur in the Gentile version of the prophecy.

<b>The time periods of Daniel</b>			
<b>Start</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Finish</b>
First year of the Babylonian Empire	609–539 B.C.	70	Last year of the Babylonian Empire
First Jewish captives taken to Babylon	606–536 B.C.	70	First Jewish captives return
Solomon’s temple destroyed	587–517 B.C.	70	Dedication of the rebuilt temple
Ezra goes to Jerusalem	458 B.C.–A.D. 33	490	Death and resurrection of Jesus
Ezekiel’s temple vision	573 B.C.–A.D. 688	1,260	Building of the Dome of the Rock
Building of the Dome of the Rock	A.D. 688–1948	1,260	Establishment of the State of Israel
Pope attains secular power	A.D. 755–2015	1,260	Beginning of the end of the papacy?
Decree of Cyrus	536 B.C.–A.D. 755	1,290	Pope attains secular power
First prophecy in Daniel	603 B.C.–A.D. 688	1,290	Building of the Dome of the Rock
Death of Mohammed	A.D. 632–1967	1,335	Liberation of East Jerusalem
Building of the Dome of the Rock	A.D. 688–2023	1,335	Zion cleansed, dedication of Ezekiel’s temple?
Greece attacks Persia	334 B.C.–A.D. 1967	2,300	Liberation of East Jerusalem
Date of the first prophecy in Daniel	603 B.C.–A.D. 1918	2,520	Palestine liberated from the Turks
Ezekiel receives his vision of the temple	573 B.C.–A.D. 1948	2,520	The establishment of the modern State of Israel
Dedication of the rebuilt Solomon’s temple	517 B.C.–A.D. 2004	2,520	Death of Palestinian leader, facilitation of peace and safety

Notice that the dates 1948 and 1967 occur twice, giving us confidence in the interpretation of the time periods.

periods of Daniel 12 link with the time of the end. When we put all the time periods of Daniel into a table ([see above](#)), various connections and patterns begin to emerge. There are some remarkable ‘coincidences’; for example:

- Adding 1,290 years to the year of the decree of Cyrus allowing the Jews to return home from Babylon (536 B.C.) brings us to the very year that the pope gained secular power (A.D. 755). The year 536 B.C. also happens to be at the end of one of the applications of the Seventy Years Prophecy of Jeremiah.
- Probably the most amazing fulfilment is the 1,335 years from the death of Mohammed

to the liberation of East Jerusalem in 1967, which is accurate to a single day, as explained in [Part 1](#). The year 1967 also happens to be the terminating date of the 2,300 years of Daniel 8.

- When seven times (2,520 years) are added to the year that Ezekiel received his vision of the temple in 573 B.C. we arrive at the establishment of the modern State of Israel in 1948. Are these just chance coincidences, or have the periods been orchestrated by God to encourage us on our journey to the Kingdom?

(Concluded)