

Daniel 8:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

Daniel's response to the vision—"I Daniel, sought for the meaning" (Hebrew: *avaqesh binah*, אֲבַקֵּשׁ בִּינָה, "I sought understanding")—demonstrates proper response to divine revelation. Daniel didn't merely experience the vision passively; he actively pursued understanding. This models how believers should approach Scripture—not passively reading but earnestly seeking comprehension through study, meditation, and prayer.

"Behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man" describes Gabriel's appearance (verse 16 identifies him). Angels often appear in human form to communicate with humans (Genesis 18, 19; Judges 13). The phrase "appearance of a man" suggests glory beyond humanity—recognizable form but transcendent nature. Gabriel's arrival initiates interpretation, showing that understanding divine revelation requires divine aid. Human wisdom alone cannot penetrate God's word; the same Spirit who inspires Scripture must illuminate it (1 Corinthians 2:10-14).

This models Christ, the ultimate revelation of God who took human form to communicate divine truth. As Gabriel helped Daniel understand, Christ reveals the Father perfectly (John 14:9). The incarnation demonstrates that God condescends to human comprehension—eternal truth clothed in accessible form. Just as Daniel needed angelic interpretation, we need the Spirit's illumination to understand Scripture's fullness.

Historical Context

Gabriel ("God's mighty one" or "hero of God") appears four times in Scripture: twice in Daniel (8:16, 9:21) and twice in Luke announcing John the Baptist's and Jesus's births (Luke 1:19, 26). As an archangel, Gabriel stands in God's presence and delivers His most significant messages. His appearance to Daniel connects Old Testament prophecy with New Testament fulfillment—the same angel who explained prophetic visions to Daniel announced Christ's incarnation, linking Daniel's prophecies to their ultimate fulfillment in Jesus.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does Daniel's active pursuit of understanding model the diligence we should bring to studying Scripture?
2. What does the necessity of angelic interpretation teach us about our dependence on divine aid—the Holy Spirit—to understand God's word?
3. In what ways does Gabriel's role connecting Daniel's prophecies to Christ's birth demonstrate Scripture's unified testimony to Jesus?

Interlinear Text

וַיֵּהָיֶה י'	בְּרָאִתִּי י'	אֲנִי י'	דָּנִי אֶל	אֶת	הַחֹזֶן וִן
H1961	had seen	H589	And it came to pass when I even I Daniel	H853	the vision
	H7200		H1840		H2377
וַאֲבַקֵּשׁ הַ	בִּינֵה הַ	וְהִנֵּה הַ	עִמָּד	לִנְגִּדִי י'	
and sought	for the meaning	H2009	then behold there stood	H5048	
H1245	H998		H5975		
כְּמֵרְאָה	גִּבּוֹר:				
before me as the appearance	of a man				
H4758	H1397				

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 10:16 (Parallel theme): And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength.

Revelation 1:13 (Parallel theme): And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

Daniel 10:18 (Parallel theme): Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me,