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**Welcome** to *EndTime Issues*...

Daniel chapters 8 through 12 contain two distinct visions (the *mareh* and the *hazon*). These develop a framework for timing prophecies related to the end of time. They were Danelic Hebrew treatises intended for God's people to familiarize them with moral struggles that lie just ahead. Daniel 8:14, part of the *mareh* vision, is provocative.

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## **Unique Biblical Number – 2300**

**Daniel 8** begins the second Hebrew portion of this seer's book. He tells us that it is a vision coming after the one that previously appeared to him (ch. 7 – originally in Aramaic). This came in approximately 548–547 B.C., while the son of Nabonidus, Belshazzar, still ruled the Babylonian Empire (8:1). The Persians would soon turn their military attention against this kingdom, signaling its demise.<sup>1</sup>

***“In my vision I saw myself in the citadel of Susa in the province of Elam; in the vision I was beside the Ulai Canal.” (Daniel 8:2 NIV).***

The Hebrew word here for “vision” is *hazon*. With exceptions, it will be this vision that continues through chapter 12. Daniel observes that he was in Susa (Shushan). The powerful Persian King Cyrus, son of Cambyses, had conquered the great Median Empire under the feeble rule of Astyages (~553 B.C.), which inaugurated the Medo-Persian Empire. Cyrus would shortly invade and conquer Babylon (539 B.C.).<sup>2</sup> Daniel's vision occurred between these two major conquests.

Susa was 350 miles east of Babylon, where Daniel was located. It had then become Cyrus' headquarters. The Ulai Canal, originally a hand-dug canal, was 900 feet wide. It was later called the Karun River, then the Eulers River.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Steinmann, Andrew E.; *Daniel* (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 2008), p. 399.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.worldhistory.org/susa/>

<sup>3</sup> Whitcomb, John C.; *Daniel* (Moody Press; Chicago, IL - 1985), p. 108. Miller, Stephen R.; *The New American Commentary, Daniel*, vol. 18 (Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), p. 221.

Daniel 8's major prophecies of the ram (Medo-Persia – Christ) and the he-goat (Greece – Satan) are addressed in another document.<sup>4</sup>

The first part of this *hazon* vision comes to an end in 8:12, with its account of a powerful little horn. Daniel then suddenly becomes a witness to two “individuals” conversing on the banks of the Ulai River. One is Christ, labeled as the “one saint” or “certain saint” (KJV) and the other Gabriel, labeled as “another saint” (KJV) (identified in vs 16).

***“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?” (Daniel 8:13 KJV).***

Part of the *hazon* vision that Daniel had just seen was violent, and showed that the growing little horn power was evil:

1. It magnified itself arrogantly against Christ (Prince of the host).
2. It assumed power over God's people and their leader and cast them to the ground (persecution).
3. The place of God's sanctuary or church was overthrown.
4. It committed a transgression that God said would lead to desolation.
5. A God-ordained “daily” was removed.

Daniel is now filled with questions and concerns. “What is Gabriel trying to get across?” he thought. Daniel remained silent until verse 15. Gabriel had just asked a “How long?” question.

This is profound. With the query, “When will these things occur and be finished?” there is a significant concern that now arises! Christ's response in 8:14 is identified as part of the *mareh* vision, clarified in 8:26a and 27b. “*And the vision [mareh] of the evening and the morning which was told is true*” ... “*I was astonished at the vision [mareh] but none understood it.*” In Daniel 9:21-27, Gabriel will finally explain that *mareh* vision!

Is verse 14 misplaced? Perhaps. It's a different vision! Gabriel actually answers his own question regarding the *hazon* in verses 17-19!

Taking the verse in its noted sequence: ***“He said to me, ‘It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated’” (Daniel 8:14 NIV).***

This will be analyzed shortly. Something strange, wonderful, and deep begins in verse 15:

***“While I, Daniel, was watching the vision [hazon] and trying to understand it, there before me stood one who looked like a man [Gabriel]” (Daniel 8:15 NIV).***

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<sup>4</sup> Fowler, Franklin S.; *EndTime Secrets of Daniel 8–12*, pp. 23-28.

The wording is engaging. Daniel is wanting to know the meaning of the ram, he-goat, and little horn vision – the *hazon*! Daniel is confused, as he had been earlier in Daniel 7:28. It appears he did not grasp Christ’s response in verse 14 related to a *mareh* vision. Something seemed out of context.

Gabriel’s question of “How long?” (8:13) distinctly related to the *hazon* vision that Daniel had been observing! Jesus’ answer in verse 14 did not address that question! It related to another new vision, the *mareh*. How do we know? Daniel is later told the *mareh* vision of the “*evening and morning is true* [correct, certain],” but the *hazon* is for the distant future (vs 26). There, the distinction between the two visions is plainly made. In fact, in Daniel 10:1 he said that he finally understood the *mareh* vision, which was not sealed!

**“And I heard a man’s voice from the Ulai calling, ‘Gabriel, tell this man the meaning of the vision [mareh]’” (Daniel 8:16 NIV).**

Jesus, the Man’s whose voice is heard between the Ulai banks, addresses Gabriel. This is the first time this angel has been named in Scripture. He is directed to help Daniel understand the *mareh* vision. Gabriel will comply but not until **Daniel 9:21-27**. “*Understand the matter, and consider the mareh vision*” (consider the message and understand that *mareh* vision)!

Why did it take so long to finally complete the *mareh* request of Jesus (a delay of perhaps 11 to 12 years)? The only objective note that seems apropos is:

**“I, Daniel, was worn out. I lay exhausted for several days. Then I got up and went about the king’s business. I was appalled by the vision [mareh]; it was beyond understanding” (Daniel 8:27 NIV).**

- Daniel finally admits he couldn’t take in the verse 14 information. He fainted or perhaps more accurately, he was exhausted and weakened.<sup>5</sup>
- By now **he has grasped a few of the issues** of the *hazon* because of verses 17 and 19 (discussed next). But still dangling was that *mareh* vision. Again, that won’t be addressed until chapter 9.

Important to see: The Hebrew word for “*astonished*” at the *mareh* also means devastated. E. G. White notes:

“The answer that was given, ‘Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed’ (verse 14), filled him with perplexity. Earnestly he sought for the meaning of the vision. He could not understand the relation sustained by the seventy years’ captivity, as foretold through Jeremiah, to the twenty-three hundred years that in vision he heard the heavenly visitant declare should elapse before the cleansing of God’s sanctuary. The angel Gabriel gave him a partial interpretation; yet when the prophet heard the words, ‘The vision ... shall be for many days,’ he fainted away. ‘I Daniel fainted,’ he records of his experience, ‘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.’ Verses 26, 27.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Steinmann, *op. cit.*, p. 412.

<sup>6</sup> *Prophets and Kings*, p. 554.

Despite Christ's instruction to help Daniel understand the 2300 *mareh*, Gabriel first undertook to answer his own query of 8:13 first:

***“As he came near the place where I was standing, I was terrified and fell prostrate. ‘Son of man,’ he said to me, ‘understand that the vision [hazon] concerns the time of the end’” (Daniel 8:17 NIV).***

Daniel was terrified and fell on his face. Was that because of God's (the man-like being's) presence? Or the approach of Gabriel? Or the content of the message? It is not revealed. Many assume the latter.

- Gabriel addressed Daniel, “Son of man,” saying that the *hazon* concerns the “*time of the end.*”
- This will be explained shortly. It relates to events surrounding the Second Coming.<sup>7</sup>
- The next verse is interesting and puzzling.

***“While he was speaking to me, I was in a deep sleep, with my face to the ground. Then he touched me and raised me to my feet” (Daniel 8:18 NIV).***

If he was in deep sleep, how is he recalling what was said? We aren't told, but Daniel was likely placed on his feet by Gabriel to receive the answer to Gabriel's own initial question:

***“He said: ‘I am going to tell you what will happen later in the time of wrath, because the vision concerns the appointed time of the end.’” (Daniel 8:19 NIV).***

This is amazing timing information regarding the *hazon* vision. The issues surround the Second Coming, and elements will be sealed until that “*time of the end*” (cf. 12:4, 9).

The phrase “*the time of the end*” means different things throughout this book of the Old Testament. In this context, it, again, relates to Christ's Second Coming.<sup>8</sup>

The “*indignation*” (KJV) (*zaam* – H) references **God's wrath!** The only exception to this in the Old Testament is in Hosea 7:16. The ram, he-goat, and the little horn visions relate not only to the end of time but also to an “*appointed time,*” which is addressed further in Daniel 11:35, associated with God's final wrath!

Daniel 8:19 is a unique verse in the book of Daniel. It contains the phrases:

- “*time of the end*”
- “*the last days at the time of the wrath*”
- “*the appointed time*”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Whitcomb, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

<sup>8</sup> Collins, John J.; *Daniel* (Fortress Press, Minneapolis, MN – 1993), p. 339. Steinmann, *op. cit.* p. 409.

<sup>9</sup> Lucas, Ernest C.; *Daniel* (Intervarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL; 2002), p. 219.

These are very helpful phrases, as they all intimate when the *hazon* will be unsealed, at an appointed time when a three-and-a-half-year period begins (Daniel 12:7 and Revelation 13:5), God's wrath is inaugurated with the Seven Trumpets, and climaxes with the Seven Vials.

- Note that the phrase "*last days at the time of the wrath*" is important.
- "*last day*" (*bed aharit*) is a term related to the "end of the world."<sup>10</sup>

This means that the ram, he-goat, and little horn prophecies apply to that era!

**Back to 8:14: "He said to me, 'It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated'" (Daniel 8:14 NIV).<sup>11</sup>**

The previous verse opens with the Hebrew words *ad-matay*, usually rendered "How long" or more accurately "Until when?"

"It is a common but mistaken notion that the emphasis is on the entire time span of the 2,300 evening–mornings. However, the stress in the question of verse 13 actually falls upon the end point of the 2,300 evening-mornings and what is to take place from that point of time onward. The emphasis is not *duration* (how long) but *termination* (until when) and what follows."<sup>12</sup>

Structure:

- The sequence of evenings/mornings is instructive. It echoes the creation days, e.g., the evening and morning were the third day (an expression of a full day<sup>13</sup>).
- This sequence also suggests a Day of Atonement, which is on the tenth day of Tishri, but the sacred celebration begins on Tishri 9, the evening before (Leviticus 23:32).

"A special importance was assigned to the day prior to the Day of Atonement, which was regarded already in the period of the Mishnah and Talmud not merely as a preparation for, but as an inseparable part of, the Day of Atonement."<sup>14</sup>

- "*The tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. Hold a sacred assembly and deny yourselves, and present a food offering to the Lord. Do not do any work on that day, because it is the Day of Atonement, when atonement is made for you before the Lord your God*" (Leviticus 23:27-28 NIV).
- Then note this timing statement:

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<sup>10</sup> Doukham, Jacques; *Daniel*, p. 126, 1987. Bennett, Douglas; *Symposium on Daniel*, "The Stone Kingdom of Daniel 2, chapter V, p. 349.

<sup>11</sup> Montgomery, James A.; *Daniel*, p. 342.

<sup>12</sup> Holbrook, Frank B., Editor; *Symposium on Daniel, Daniel and Revelation Committee Series*, Vol. 2, Gerhard F. Hasel, p. 429.

<sup>13</sup> Keil, C. F. and F. Delitzsch; *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, Massachusetts 01961-3473; 2006 – 2nd printing), vol. 9, pp. 692-696.

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/day-of-atonement>

*“It is a day of sabbath rest for you, and you must deny yourselves. From the evening of the ninth day of the month until the following evening you are to observe your sabbath.”* (Leviticus 23:32 NIV).

- Though a day was reckoned even to even, the ninth day noted addresses the “evening morning” sequence, as noted in a special way in the above Jewish reference.

The Day of Atonement occurred once a year in the fall. This would then represent 2300 “Atonement” years.

- The emphasis is not on the whole 2300 years but what is expected at the end of the 2300 years.<sup>15</sup>
- The word “*sanctuary*” is a distinct Hebrew word in 8:11 – *miqdash*. This represents the physical center or tabernacle of worship. In 8:14, however, the word *qodesh*, without an article is used. In context, “*holiness*” would be suggested.
- The word “*cleansed*” is a passive verb, *nisdeq*, meaning “vindicated.”<sup>16</sup>

In elevated prose, the text implies, “On or after 2300 atonement years, holiness will be vindicated.” Daniel 9:24 unfolds the pathway that will make this happen!

***“While I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. He instructed me and said to me, ‘Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding. As soon as you began to pray, a word went out, which I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed. Therefore, consider the word and understand the vision [mareh]:”*** (Daniel 9:21-23 NIV).

What will then justify or vindicate God’s holiness?

***“Seventy ‘sevens’ are decreed for your people and your holy city to [1] finish transgression, [2] to put an end to sin, [3] to atone for wickedness, [resulting in] to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the Most Holy Place”*** (Daniel 9:24 NIV).

- The sacred response of God’s people will usher in the time of the end.
- Satan’s vindictive ways will cease, and all records of sin will be put on the scapegoat.

The Day of Atonement was when the iniquities of all the people were submitted to divine judgment. All their sins were presented judicially before God (Leviticus 16:21-22, 30). Sins were not only pardoned but banished from the camp. This embraces the elevated insights of that *mareh* vision. *God’s holiness is vindicated!*

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<sup>15</sup> Hasel, Gerard H.; John Nevins Andrews, Professor of Old Testament and Biblical Theology, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan; *The “Days” of Creation in Genesis 1: Literal “days” or figurative “Periods/Epochs” of time?* p. 336.

<sup>16</sup> Montgomery, James A; *The Book of Daniel* (Varda Books; Skokie, IL; 2016), p. p. 342.

The outcome? Everlasting righteousness will come! A “new creation” is inaugurated. The “2300” means 2300 days of re-creation or Days of Atonement – or 2300 years. The “day for a year” tool is not needed.<sup>17</sup> The text appeals to this annual restorative event.

Part of Gabriel’s original question is not only associated with the ram, he-goat, and little horn but the latter’s “*transgression of desolation.*” That links directly to the time of the end, the appointed time, and the abomination of desolation in Daniel 11:31-35 and 12:11-12.

- The *hazon* relates to that time of the end.
- The everlasting righteousness (*mareh*) will then be set in motion!

In chapter 8 the focus is placed on or after the end of the 2300 evenings and mornings.<sup>18</sup> What follows that period would be the fulfilment of the ram, he-goat, and little horn vision. The ending phase of 8:14 is translated in many ways because of interpreters’ biases. Examples:

- KJV: “then shall the sanctuary be cleansed”
- RSV: “then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful place”
- NRS: “then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state”
- NET: “then the sanctuary shall be put right again”
- NIV: “then the sanctuary shall be reconsecrated”

All of these are prejudiced because of the assumption that it refers to the Syrian king Antiochus IV Epiphanes when he contaminated the sanctuary by sacrificing a pig in front of the Jewish sanctuary. A restorative cleansing followed to reconsecrate that temple area.

That history that influenced the book of Daniel’s varied translations:

After Alexander the Great died in 323 B.C., the Greek Empire was divided into four parts, each controlled by one of his four key generals. The northern area was under Seleucus. Later, a descendant, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, ruled there as a king from 175 to 164 B.C.

In 171 B.C. Antiochus IV deposed the Jewish High Priest, Jason. A tragic and complex history followed with 40,000 Jews in Judea being killed by Antiochus and his army. He outlawed Jewish practices and ordered the worship of the Greek god Zeus. That is when he ordered a pig sacrifice be made to this god in front of the Jewish temple at Jerusalem in 167 B.C.<sup>19</sup>

Shortly thereafter, Mattathias, a Jewish priest, with his five sons, revolted. This priest died in 166 B.C. His son, Judas Maccabeus, took over the armed resistance. Antiochus IV’s forces fell. The Jewish worship could now be reinstated.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Doukhan, Jacques B.; *Secrets of Daniel* (The Review and Herald Publishing Association; Hagerstown, MD 21740; 2000), pp. 126-131.

<sup>18</sup> *Symposium on Daniel*, p. 436, *ibid.*, #12.

<sup>19</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antiochus\\_IV\\_Epiphanes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antiochus_IV_Epiphanes)

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.gotquestions.org/Maccabean-Revolt.html>

On December 14, 164 B.C., Judas Maccabeus rededicated the temple. This was seen as a “cleansing of the temple.” This was inserted as part of the text in 8:14 in the Septuagint (a Greek translation of the ancient Hebrew – finished in 132 B.C.).<sup>21</sup>

That text formed the basis of many Christian Old Testament translations.

#### A deeper look at the last phrase of Daniel 8:14:

Instead of translating the Hebrew word *nisdaq* to words originally meant, like “made right” or “vindicated,” the Septuagint translated it as *katharisthesetai* – “shall be cleansed.” This was interpreted to represent the cleansing of the Jerusalem temple in 164 B.C. from the ravages of Antiochus IV.

- The book of Daniel was written long before this time. Was that a prophecy for the Antiochus era?
- Old translations such as the *Latin Vulgate*, *Syriac Peshitta*, *Theodition*, and *Coptic* translations continued using *katharisthesetai* (cleansed or purified) in 8:14.<sup>22</sup> Ancient Hebrew records (the *Dead Sea Scrolls*) use *nisdaq*, a passive *hiphil* verb, meaning to justify or vindicate. It is a word implying a positive judicial outcome.

The word for “*sanctuary*” became an additional challenge. Daniel already wrote about the sanctuary in 8:11-12, using the Hebrew word *miqdash*. Why would he in the same context interpret “*qodes*” in verse 14 as the *sanctuary* when he clearly used *miqdash* two or three verses prior? Without an article, *qodes* likely should be viewed as “holiness.”

This amazing verse tied to “everlasting righteousness” in chapter 9 are both part of the *mareh* vision. God is saying, on or after 2300 atonement years, *holiness will be vindicated!* Again, Daniel 9:24 tells us how! The context points to when redemptive history approaches the end!

Though a separate study, this 2300 years in the *mareh* vision suggests that this wonderful objective cannot occur until on or after 1843–1844. This is a timing marker. It is a waymark. After that time, events can move forward toward the time of the end, encompassing Christ’s Second Coming.

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<sup>21</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Septuagint>

<sup>22</sup> *Symposium on Daniel*, p. 450, *ibid.* #s 12 and 18.