

“2300” KEEPS GIVING

The book of Daniel ends with five chapters written in Hebrew (most of the others are in Aramaic). Many have concluded that those messages are especially for God’s people.

- Unique is the **reapplication** of the Medo-Persian and Greek Empire symbols from chapter 7 to a **ram** and **rough he-goat** in chapter 8.
- Though not the purpose of this document, that transition imagery conveys a message far beyond literal kingdoms. It prophetically introduces the final clash between right and wrong, Christ and Satan, declared by Gabriel for the “time of the end” (8:17).

The ram and he-goat prophecy ends with a little horn that represents **the last-day** antichrist. Its narrative is completed by Daniel 8:12. As with a large number of prophecies, timing notations define when they demand special attention. Each symbol and event within that chapter has introductory importance to the period antedating of the Second Coming.

As the prophecy ends, **time** is on Gabriel’s mind!

- He and Christ interact in Daniel 8:13-16. Daniel, listening in, writes and reacts.
- That discourse includes a question Gabriel asked related to **when** the little horn’s horrors would occur and end.
- Many expositors see this little horn as a replication of a similar prophecy in the previous chapter. Its identity is the same – but the timing is different. That is why Gabriel questions! Its importance can be identified through “time.”

In that context we begin this study.

Gabriel’s Summary Review within a Question

Daniel was given the militant itinerary of the apocalyptic little horn (8:9-12). The last descriptive words about that antichrist power are: *“It practiced and prospered”* (vs 12). It will succeed in doing what the prophecy noted! That “triumph” parallels numerous other antichrist references:

“The king shall ... prosper till the indignation be accomplished” (Daniel 11:36).

“He [king of the north] shall have power over the treasure of gold and silver” (Daniel 11:43).

“That man of sin ... sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God” (II Thessalonians 2:4).

“And all the world wondered after the beast” (Revelation 13:4).

During the suspense and emotional drama relative to this horn’s tumultuous activity, Gabriel asked Christ that pointed timing question regarding this power. That summary question is recorded especially for us.

*“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).

- It is important to note that Gabriel already knew the answer to his question, as we will shortly see.
- In his prophetic *explanation* to Daniel (and for us) he identifies this little horn power as a “king of fierce countenance,” who understands deception (8:23, cf. 11:36-39).
- There, he notes additionally that this king will arise towards the end of the ram and he-goat “kingdom” conflict. The end of redemptive history is in view. Daniel 12 adds major *terminus ad quem* details.

Gabriel said that this prophecy would occur in the “latter time” or “last end” of God’s wrath (8:17-19). That “latter time” comes from the Hebrew word *’aharit*.

“The word *’aharit* which has **eschatological overtones** conveys the idea of a *far* future, the outcome of history and not necessarily of a chronological end (cf. Is. 2:1; Jer. 48:47; 49:39; Ez. 38:8; cf. especially Dan. 10:14; cf. T. Boman, *Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek*, 1960, p. 149; cf. H. Seebass, *’acharith*, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, J. Botterweck, H. Ringgren, eds., 1977, pp. 207-212).”¹

Gabriel’s question to Christ is expressed in a variety of ways depending on the English translation. All, however, relate to the period when human “history” is concluding relative to that little horn (Daniel 8:13):

- KJV: *“How long shall be the vision concerning?”*
- NET: *“To what period of time does the vision pertain?”*
- NIV: *“How long will it take for the vision to be fulfilled?”*
- NKJV: *“How long will the vision be?”*

Most English translations begin with the phrase “How long,” based on two Hebrew words: *ad matay* in Gabriel’s question. These words have been a source of conflict with numerous scholars – some seeing the question as referring to how long the little horn would be active, when it would end, when it would begin, or the period it would “be active.” The various translations reflect this confusion.

- “*ad*” is rendered till or until.
- “*matay*” means “when”²
- “*until when?*” – “*till when?*” – is a question³

Careful exegesis shows that the question refers to an endpoint. This is consistently true for each place that this question is asked (Psalm 6:4, 94:3; Nehemiah 2:6; Exodus 10:3, 7;

¹ Quoted in: Daukhan, Jacques B.; *Secrets of Daniel* (The Review and Herald Publishing Association; Hagerstown, MD 21740; 1987), p. 127 (emphasis added).

² Bible Works, Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon* (unabridged). p. 5797.

³ Hasel, Gerhard F.; *Symposium on Daniel*, “The ‘Little Horn,’ the Heavenly Sanctuary, and the Time of the End: A Study of Daniel 8:9-14” (Holbrook, Frank B., editor; Biblical Research Institute, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Springs, MD – 1992), p. 429.

Jeremiah 4:14, 21; 12:4; Habakkuk 2:6; Zechariah 1:12).⁴ Daniel will use the same question later when talking with Jesus in a Day-of-Atonement setting (12:6). There, Daniel clarifies even more the issue by saying *ad matay qes* (“until when [will it] end”).

- Until when will this little horn’s war against Christ and His people end? (8:13)
- Until when will the terrible work of the king of the north end and deliverance come? (12:6)
- Both respectively – referring to the same antichrist power and time.

The queries then: “When will God bring this antichrist oppressor to an end?” [paraphrased]. The focus is not on “How long” (a period of time) but when will these things occur and terminate. This sensitivity is closely rendered in the NIV translation.

- *“Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to him, ‘How long will it take for the vision to be fulfilled – the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, the rebellion that causes desolation, the surrender of the sanctuary and the trampling underfoot of the LORD’s people?’”* (Daniel 8:13).
- A similar cry comes from the martyrs in the fifth seal (Revelation 6:10). “How long, oh Lord, how long?” When will the persecution and martyrdom of the pale horse end?
- If Gabriel meant a period of time with a beginning and an ending, he would have asked “How many days?” or “How much time?” (Genesis 47:8, Psalm 119.84).⁵

“**None** of these Biblical references point to a period of time **implying** its starting point.”⁶ It is not even, How long it will last? It points to a *terminus ad quem*.

There was an end noted in Daniel 7 to that little horn.

- *“I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame”* (Daniel 7:11).
- *“But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end”* (Daniel 7:26).

There, the “end” is described twice and follows a period identified as time, times and dividing of times (7:25). There are two other antichrist ends in this Hebrew part of Daniel:

*“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**”* (Daniel 8:25).

*“And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet **he shall come to his end, and none shall help him**”* (Daniel 11:45).

⁴ Laiu, Florin G.H.; *An Exegetical Study of Daniel 7–9*. 1999, p. 117.

⁵ Laiu, op. cit., p. 117

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 117-118 (emphasis added).

“The end of the little horn will not result from natural causes, but from an extraordinary act of judgment on God’s part, closing the circle of history (Dan. 2:34; 11:45).”⁷

Elsewhere in the Old Testament this terminus is similarly portrayed as related to Babylon:

It will be judged and destroyed (Jeremiah 1:14; 46:13, 20; 50:1, 3; Ezekiel 26:7). Intriguingly, Babylon and the little horn “figures are identical even in their motivation. This helps to tie Daniel with the many warnings related to Babylon.”⁸ The final outcome?

In the apocalypse John describes its fearful end:

“And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name” (Revelation 14:9-11).

All the above series of verses affirm that the little horn/king of the north/Babylon/vile person/man of sin will be destroyed. In His timing God’s wrath against evil supervenes.

Christ Responds to Gabriel’s Question

“He said to me, “It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated” (Daniel 8:14 – NIV).

As many are now aware, the word “days” is not in the original Hebrew text as used in the King James Version. This is the only place in the Old Testament that the number 2300 is noted. Its onset is derived from the “decree” anticipated in 9:25 because that chapter is part of the same “*mareh*” vision as 8:14 (cf. 8:26).

- The context does not say 2300 literal days (six years and four months) – nor 1150 days (three years and two months).
- It is clear that the “odd” number was meant to be a precise length of time.

Many massage these numbers to fit the Antiochus IV persecution. Laiu warns that those attempts fall short of the Biblical time and are drawn principally from 1 Maccabees.

⁷ Daukhan, Jacques B.; *Secrets of Daniel* (The Review and Herald Publishing Association; Hagerstown, MD 21740), p. 127.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 1987, p. 66.

“1Mac 1:22	143 SE	169 BCE	First sack of the Temple and attack on the Jews
1Mac 1:30	145 SE	167 BCE	The tax-collector sent in Judea
1Mac 1:57	145 SE Kislew 15	167 BCE Dec.15.	Temple profaned by pagan cult
1Mac 4:52	148 SE Kislew 25	164 BCE Dec.25	Temple cleansed and rededicated (after 3 years).
1Mac 6:16	149 SE	Nov / Dec 164	Antiochus dies.

[SE = the Selueid era]⁹

Continuing with the Antiochus Epiphanes IV concern: “Thus we have exactly 3 years (c.1090 days) for the temple’s profanation, and less than 6 years, if we count from the first attack of Antiochus upon the Jews, and none of the exact periods given in Daniel (1260 days, 1290 days, 1335 days, 2300 days) is satisfied. This is why the rationalist critique concluded that Daniel was written after the persecution of Epiphanes began, but before the rededication of the Temple.”¹⁰ The use of this “Seleucid history” simply is a problem interpretation.

Christ’s 2300 evening morning timing emphasis is intriguing. The question of Gabriel relates to the little horn. Christ’s answer relates to the vindication of holiness – a cleansing, if you please (*wa•nisdeq qodesh*). At first one might be tempted to resist the connection – except that the answer begins with the Hebrew word *ad•waw* (“until then”). A timing issue then can be seen for two messages!

Gabriel (re: *ha•hazon* vision): “until when?” (the little horn/antichrist comes to an end)
 Jesus (re: *mareh* vision): “until 2300 evening morning (it could be at its end or after), and then he adds those amazing words: *wa.nisdeq qodesh* (passive) – holiness will be vindicated.

Two different *visions* – two different *issues*. Why did Christ answer this way? He was moving the war/persecution/negative prophecy forward to a theme of final hope – the end of sin! The latter is continued and embellished in Daniel 9.

- Christ’s Daniel 8:14 answer introduces new thinking that there are timing issues related to that end.¹¹
- This is a significant issue to recognize which, in turn, elevates our end-time understanding!

On or after 2300 years, (1) the little horn will come to its end and (2) holiness will be vindicated. This represents Gabriel’s “far into the future” message he later addresses (8:19).

This brings into focus other timing messages that continue to answer Gabriel’s question: “Until when?” (*ad•matay*). Kindly note this amazing forward flow to its conclusion (at the end of this narrative is a sequenced graph that outlines these amazing “clocks):

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 405-407.

¹¹ Hasel, *op. cit.*, p. 430.

Gabriel: “Until when?” will this little horn/antichrist come to an end? (Daniel 8:13)

Jesus: “Until the 2300 evening morning” is completed (8:14)

Then we think: “Can you be more specific?”

Gabriel (at Christ’s request): “At **the time of the end** shall be the vision” (*ha•hazon* – little horn) (8:17)

Then we think again: “When might that be?”

Gabriel: “at the time appointed (*moed*) the end shall be.” (8:19)

Then we ask: “When is the time appointed?”

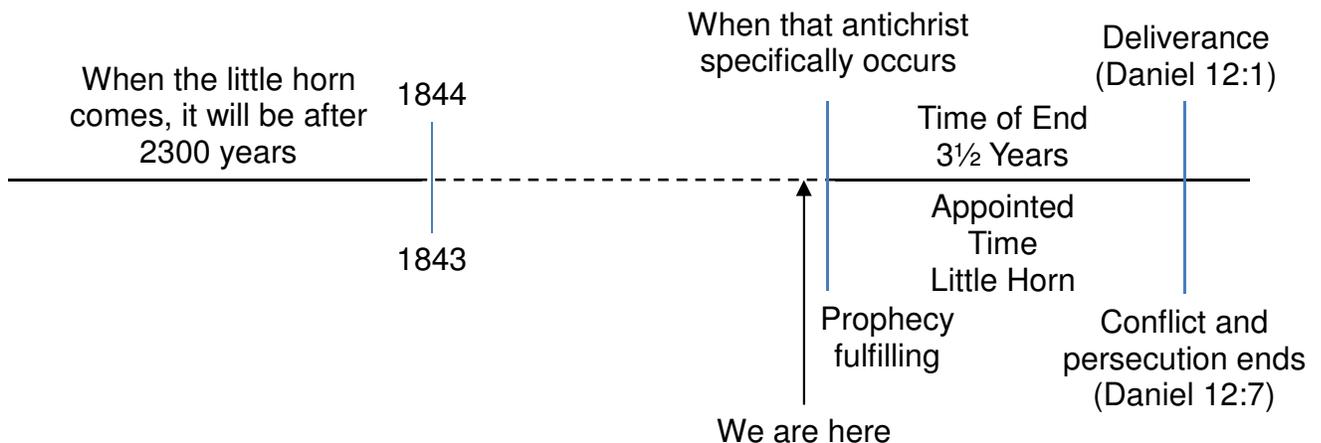
Gabriel: Here’s the flow of timing prophecies that finally answer our last questions:

- A vile person (antichrist) forsakes the holy covenant (11:30).
- He pollutes the sanctuary (11:31)
- By taking away the daily and setting up an abomination (11:31).
- These (and more) go to the **time of the end** set for **an appointed time** (*moed*) (11:35).

Daniel: “**How long**” (*ad•matay*) till all these wonders (antichrist, wanting to be like God, deliverance and special resurrection) come to an end? (12:6)

Jesus: “It shall be times (*moed*), times (*moeim*) and half.” When the antichrist finishes scattering the power of God’s people, all these things shall be finished (Daniel 12:7).

Graphically (simple outline):



Christ’s prophecy of 2300 years specifically identifies that at or after its termination point holiness/“sanctuary” will be vindicated. It represents a *terminus a quo* **when** redemptive issues **can draw to a close**. It **begins a time** in which very end-time prophecy has permission to finally move forward! **Key!**

There is something else of great interest! The 2300 number is defined in “evening” and “morning” terms. Though Leviticus 24:3 identifies that as a daily time when the Menorah would be provided fresh oil, that was specifically to have *light at night within the sanctuary*. The Day of Atonement was identified as being on Tishri 10, but the **evening before** actually began its

sacred celebration (Leviticus 23:32). That sequence of words, “evening morning” (not morning evening), though defined through the days of Creation, identified for Israel a sacred time – an “appointed time.” From Leviticus 23 and other parts of the *mareh* vision in Daniel 8 through 10, we know this symbolizes 2300 Day of Atonements, annual fall events.

Since the focus of Gabriel’s question and Christ’s response is on the end of sin’s conflict, the time which follows the end of the 2300 years does likewise. In fact, might it not also begin the “great wrap-up” where the heavenly administration is commencing plans to divide the world into sheep and goats – exactly what happened on the Day of Atonement?

The 2300 Atonement-year prophecy is a sacred landmark, recorded by Daniel, pointing to the future. Its deepest ramifications are embellished in a continuation of the *mareh* vision in Daniel 9 and the first part of 10. God is providing a sanctifying message – a holiness plea that must be completed before “the end.” That means: Time is running out!

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Prophecy Research Initiative – non-profit 501(c)3 © 2015
EndTime Issues..., Number 182, October 8, 2015

Sequence timing graph follows.

Daniel's Progressive Time of the End – Appointed Time Prophecies

Note: Christ only partly answered Gabriel's "when" question. But – He introduced another issue: the vindication of holiness. That wouldn't be explained until the next chapter.

