

“EVENING” AND “MORNING”

A BEAUTIFUL PROMISE

Introduction

The record of Satan’s victories stains the purity of an earth that God once called “good.” His evil power quickly compounded when Abel’s innocent blood was spilled on the ground. When Innocence hung on the Cross, the annihilation of the devil’s loathsome influence was assured. Yet, a mystery lingered that would puzzle even the imagination of angels: “Why have sin, heartache, persecution and death continued so long?”

Such questions strongly reverberate when reflecting on the blood of Waldensian Christians who brought heinous satisfaction to Satan and his minions. “The very existence of this people, holding the faith of the ancient church, was a constant testimony to Rome’s apostasy, and therefore excited the most bitter hatred and persecution. Their refusal to surrender the Scriptures was also an offense that Rome could not tolerate. She determined to blot them from the earth. Now began the most terrible crusades against God’s people in their mountain homes. Inquisitors were put upon their track, and the scene of innocent Abel falling before the murderous Cain was often repeated.”¹

This is reflected in the prophecy of the “*little horn*” who defied God (Daniel 7:8) and persecuted His people (7:25). The beast and that blasphemous horn were eventually destroyed – but not until long after their heinous crimes (vs 11). A delay in divine justice is frequently apparent in Scripture. Additionally, a judicial process must occur first (vss 9 and 10) with God as the presiding judge. But, again, that executive process and legal outcome seem long postponed, which drives that query, “Why does it take so long?” “When will all this cease?”

That “*little horn*” rises anew at the end of time, casting truth to the ground, moving God’s church from its very foundations and harming His followers (Daniel 8:9-12). In another antichrist symbol, John notes that a woman is drunk with the blood of the saints (Revelation 17:6). The angel Gabriel even asks Jesus with intensity, “**How long?**” (Daniel 8:13) until you step in and vindicate your saints and your name.

- What an opportunity for Jesus to respond! He could have announced that His wrath will soon ignite and wipe that evil power out of existence.
- But He doesn’t.
- Why doesn’t He introduce the third angel’s message, which talks about the “*wine of the fierceness of his wrath*” (Revelation 14:19) after that horrible “*little horn*” narrative?

In another final rise of the antichrist narrative (Daniel 11:29-45), even more heinous evil is described against women and His covenant people. After hearing that report, Daniel is beside himself and he, too, asks, “**How long?**”

¹ White, Ellen G.; *The Great Controversy*, p. 76.

- Jesus is right there in front of him, above a river representing God’s people. Daniel queried painfully, “When is this all going to stop?”
- Another amazing moment presented itself when the Messiah could demonstrate heaven’s abhorrence of evil and defiance of truth. But – His response seems “too gentle” for the evil described. It seems like the promise of divine wrath against wrong would have been in order.
- But it is absent.
- Why doesn’t He now cry mightily: “... with a strong voice, saying, *Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.... Therefore, shall her plagues come.*” (Revelation 18:1, 8).

The record is even filled with the concept of an “*eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth*” (Leviticus 24:20). Isn’t it now time to “lash out” because evil appears to be the victor?

- In Revelation this retaliation concept is reiterated in end-time prophecy.
- “*He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints*” (Revelation 13:10).
- This response is called “*lex talionis.*” But why is it taking so long? Even the martyrs under the fifth Seal cry, “*How long?*” (Revelation 6:10).

We are thoughtfully advised:

“God’s judgments will be visited upon those who are seeking to oppress and destroy His people. His long forbearance with the wicked emboldens men in transgression, but their punishment is nonetheless certain and terrible because it is long delayed. ‘The Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim, He shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that He may do His work, His strange work; and bring to pass His act, His strange act.’ Isaiah 28:21. To our merciful God the act of punishment is a strange act. ‘As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked.’ Ezekiel 33:11. The Lord is ‘merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, ... forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.’ Yet He will ‘by no means clear the guilty.’ ‘The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked.’ Exodus 34:6, 7; Nahum 1:3. By terrible things in righteousness He will vindicate the authority of His downtrodden law. ***The severity of the retribution awaiting the transgressor may be judged by the Lord’s reluctance to execute justice.*** The nation with which He bears long, and which He will not smite until it has filled up the measure of its iniquity in God’s account, will finally drink the cup of wrath unmixed with mercy.”²

This is almost a “hidden principle” to those observing or even experiencing evil. It brought a “cry” from the lips of Gabriel, “*How long*” will this continue (Daniel 8:13)?

² White, Ellen G.; *Darkness Before Dawn*, pp. 43-44.

Christ's Response to Gabriel

Daniel 8:14 (that response) has been manipulated like clay in the way it has been analyzed, translated and interpreted by Jews and Christians! It is, however, Christ's response to Gabriel's question, "How long?"

- "And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (Daniel 8:14 – KJV).
- "He said to me, 'It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated'" (Daniel 8:14 – NIV).

The literal transliteration of the Hebrew words: "And he said to me, until evening morning, 2300, then the vindication [of] holy." The focus of this document is on the wonders of "evening morning" (*ereb boqer*). Gabriel explained it further in 8:26: "the vision of the evening and the morning."³

The "evening morning" expression is referenced in much of the literature as meaning the morning and evening sacrifices offered daily in the Jewish Temple. This partially explains why the word "sacrifice" is **added** in the KJV, along with the word "**days.**"

- That "burnt offering" of an unblemished lamb occurred each **morning and evening**, and was to be a "continual" offering (Exodus 29:38-42).
- It was referenced as "one unit" (cf. Numbers 28:3-6) – not two.
- The "morning" precedes the "evening" in all those Old Testament references, related to that daily sacrifice.⁴

The "Evening Morning" Sequence

The "evening morning" is unique in its sequence. In Daniel 8:14 it is without a conjunction between the two words.

The sequence echoes the Creation account: "And there was evening, and there was morning – the first day" (Genesis 1:5 – NIV; cf. 1:8, 13, 19, 23, 31).

- That wording was not used with the seventh day of Creation.
- That invites the concept of something special – a "different" approach to the seventh day.
- In the setting preceding 8:14, Daniel had just experienced in vision the terrible successes of the "little horn" antichrist (vss 9-12). The thought of resistance, curtailing its power or even preserving divine honor is intimated by Gabriel's question "How long?!"
- Clearly, with urgency, time is on his mind.

³ Montgomery, James A; *The Book of Daniel* (Varda Books; Stokie, IL; 2016), p. 343.

⁴ Schwantes, Siegfried J.; *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 16, "ereb boqr of Dan 8:14 Re-examined," 1978, pp. 376, 381.

Most interesting are these **singular** words: “*evening morning*” (*ereb boqer* not plural) in Christ’s answer!

- The number 2300, which follows, acts like an adjective.
- This forces attention on this unit, evening-morning.⁵

Since there is no “and” between the “*evening*” and “*morning*,” and the words are singular, that “phrase” stands for a **single unit**, of which there are 2300. Many scholars have concluded that this “period” or “unit” represents one whole day. That is, it is not one evening and one morning but an “item” – evening-morning.⁶

It has been argued that in verse 26, where “*the evening and the morning*” is used, it is not a whole day but one evening and one morning – and, therefore, explains 8:14. This has been rejected because there is no need to see it there as a unit. It is simply referring back to the *evening-morning unit* in 8:14.

Daniel’s expression, “*evening morning*,” without an article or conjunction is a “merism” for a day, where elements are paired to signify a whole. This is the “implicit understanding” that underlies the special Sabbath regulation for the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:32) implied here.⁷

The expression *me ereb ad-boguer* – “*from evening till morning*” as found in **Leviticus 24** is totally different, however.

- “*Command the Israelites to bring you clear oil of pressed olives for the light so that the lamps may be kept burning continually. Outside the curtain that shields the ark of the covenant law in the tent of meeting, Aaron is to tend the lamps before the LORD from evening till morning, continually. This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come*” (Leviticus 24:2-3).
- That sequence is obvious: “The lights should burn during the night and not during the day.”⁸ It represents only a partial day.

Looking Deeper into Gabriel’s Question

The little horn antichrist who magnifies himself to the Prince of Princes, casts His people (host – stars) to the ground (makes them helpless, persecutes and even destroys), casts truth to the ground (making it worthless), moves the very place or foundation of God’s church and is involved with a sin (“*transgression*”) so bad that God later calls it an “*abomination*.” Finally, it removes the “*daily*” out of its place – something that relates to God (Daniel 8:9-12).

⁵ Probstle, Martin T.; Andrews University Dissertation, *Truth and Terror: a Text Oriented Analysis of Daniel 8:9-14*, p. 374.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 376.

⁷ Steinmann, Andrew E.; *The Bible Translator*, “Night and Day, Evening and Morning,” vol. 62, No. 3, p. 145.

⁸ Schwantes, *op. cit.*, p. 381.

Gabriel then inquires of Jesus:

- “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 – NIV).
- The concern is **timing** – the issue is **the end** of the “terrible success” of the little horn against God and His people.

The question: “*How long?*” (*ad matay*) is “typically used throughout the O.T. for questions concerning when God will finally punish persecutors and vindicate the oppressed. Again, in the fifth Seal the same cry is given of the ‘martyrs.’ ‘How long’ is an emphasis on ‘God’s defending his own reputation by judging sinners.”⁹

- This question for justice is an anguishing plea addressed to God by Gabriel and, elsewhere, a suffering people (Psalm 79:5, 89:46, 90:13; Isaiah 6:11; Habakkuk 1:2; Zechariah 1:12; Daniel 12:6).
- The question is not whether God will judge the transgressors – but how soon.¹⁰

The cry is for justice and vindication: “*And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?*” (Luke 18:7 – KJV).¹¹

When will evil cease and holiness be restored? When will your glorious name be honored? When will the loyalties of your people be rewarded? When will evil be punished? When will justice prevail?

- In light of this setting, the answer Christ gave in 8:14 has amazing relevance.
- It echoes down to our time and the “*consummation*” of evil.

Christ’s First Words: “Until evening morning”

The late Jewish scholar, Umberto Cassuto, wrote an indepth analysis of the early chapters of Genesis. He addressed the issue of the Creation days, the Jewish understanding of “time” and how tradition has influenced its meaning. He concluded that there was “only one system in computing time: the day is considered to begin in the morning, **but** in regards to the festivals and appointed times [which also referenced the Creation week], the Torah ordains that they shall be observed [beginning] ... the night of the preceding day.”¹²

⁹ Beale, Gregory K.; *The New International Greek Testament Commentary; The Book of Revelation* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan – 1999), p. 392.

¹⁰ Osborne, Grant R.; *Revelation* (Baker Book House; Grand Rapids, MI), pp. 288-289.

¹¹ Aune, David E.; *52B World Biblical Commentary; Revelation 6–16* (World Books; Dallas, Texas), 1997, p. 407.

¹² Cassuto, Umberto; *Genesis I*, p. 29, as quoted by R. Laird Harris, *Theological Word Book of the Old Testament*, vol. II, p. 1687 (emphasis added).

Two Old Testament examples include:

1. *“And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it **in the evening**”* (Exodus 12:6, 8, 10).
 - Passover began on the evening of the fourteenth day of Abib or Nissan.
 - The main celebration was, therefore, on the 15th of that month – at the onset of the festival of “unleavened bread.” It was then, in that first Passover, that the Israelites began their journey to Canaan.
2. *“Also on **the tenth day** of this seventh month there shall be a **day of atonement**: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.... Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: **in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath**”* (Leviticus 23:27, 31-32).
 - This festival Sabbath, with the humiliation of one’s self, began on the evening of the ninth of Tishri – that seventh month.

The explicit tie to Daniel 8:14 would be the Day of Atonement.¹³ Why? It represents the end of rebellion against God – not the onset of the journey! It begins to answer when the success of evil will end. It assumes a time when the establishment of holiness will occur! Everything has been cleansed.

This is the only place in the Jewish calendar (of the feast cycles) when the precise time for such a **high day** is set. The expression “*evening to evening*,” being unique, emphasizing a whole day.¹⁴ “Daniel 8 not only implicitly but explicitly refers to the Day of Atonement.”¹⁵

“For the Israelite, Kippur symbolized the purification of the world, a true re-creation. This is why Daniel uses the expression ‘evenings and morning’ (Dan. 8:14), a phrase that occurs strictly in the context of Creation (Gen. 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31).

“Jewish tradition also associated the idea of Creation, like that of judgment, with the day of Kippur. The ancient Midrash, interpreting the first verses of Creation, declares: ‘There was an evening, and there was a morning, one day, this means that the Holy One, Blessed be he, gave them (Israel) one day, which is none other than the day of Kippur.’¹⁶

The imagery deepens when Doukhan notes: “The prophecy of Daniel sees on the horizon of history a heavenly Kippur described in terms of judgment and creation.

“Kippur is simultaneously the awareness of divine judgment and the hope of re-creation.”¹⁷

¹³ Probstle, *op. cit.*, pp. 390-391.

¹⁴ Hartley, John E.; *Word Biblical Commentary – Leviticus*, No. 4 (Thomas Nelson; Nashville, TN; Dallas, TX; 1992), p. 388.

¹⁵ Doukhan, Jacques B.; *Secrets of Daniel (The Review and Herald Publishig Association; Hagerstown, MD; 2000).*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 130-131.

- In the Creation account, God’s perfect imprint was made in an evening and morning block of time; in prophecy, a restoration, a re-creation!
- The redemptive plan also requires judgment when the horrors of Satan, sin and his followers cease.

Both are a distinct work of the Day of Atonement!

The picture of the little horn’s work in Daniel 7 and 8 is one of destruction, rebellion and assumption of ill-gained power. This represents the earth before Creation, when it was without form, void and chaotic.

- *“And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up”* (Daniel 8:23).
- A re-creation is in order, is needed and is wanted in the cries, “How long?”
- First, a judicial act occurs (Daniel 7:9-10), a punishment (Daniel 7:11, 26; 8:25; 11:45), then a recreation – a “new day” – when sin has been taken away.

How is that Re-creation Presented?

The intertextual tie leads back to the enthronement narrative of *“one like the Son of man”* (Daniel 7:13-14). The annihilation of wrong was previously depicted (7:11). Christ receives His eternal “reward.” A “new” kingdom is established. This echoes the creation story when one observes first chaos to, finally, the origin of man. There in Daniel, chaos against God is noted; then an eternal kingdom comes from the Father’s activity!

In Daniel 8 the creation/re-creation terminology is expressed in the *“evening morning”*: It characterizes the restoration of the *“holy”* as God’s recreation. From Satan’s attack on God’s people and church to recreation, when all this will be made holy again (*nisdaq qodesh* – vs 14). These themes evoke “an eschatological Day of atonement.”¹⁸ That is the only Jewish “religious ritual” which deals with *“holy”* (*qodesh*) – or holiness restored.

That Day of Atonement

The process of establishing holiness is inherent in this special day. The cessation of all work, which is unique for an Israelite in this yearly festival, ties to the sacred time of the Sabbath. This day is associated with purification of the sanctuary and the people, all requiring a divine judicial acceptance. The eschatological Day of Atonement is in view in Daniel 8:14 as a promise! All evil will end. Peace will eternally reign.

The little horn’s assault in Daniel 8:9-12 attacked elements of God’s church and its loyalists. Everything was harmed, tainted, abused, destroyed or moved out of its place.

- Gabriel’s cry, *“How long?”* must reverberate with the inhabitants of heaven and find an immediate sympathetic chord with God’s people.

¹⁸ Probstle, *op. cit.*, pp. 493, 647, 653, 664.

- Christ's response with "*evening morning*" sends electrifying hope that **holiness** will be restored. It is actually a promise!
- Sacred harmony will be reestablished within the church and its people.

The Atonement promise is elevated when Christ adds a timing element as to **when** everything will **begin to be made right**. Later, in verse 25, that antichrist king does come to his end – supernaturally.

A divine message was given in Leviticus 23 regarding the dual purpose of the Day of Atonement.

- *"Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD. And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, [1] to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God. [2] For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people"* (Leviticus 23:27-29).
- This depicts a willful consecration by His people and a final judicial retribution against apostasy.

The onset of God's judicial work is announced in Daniel 7:9-10. The Danelic outcome against apostasy and the antichrist is seen from Daniel by:

1. *"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).
2. *"But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end"* (Daniel 7:26).
3. *"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).
4. *"... yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him"* (Daniel 11:45c).

Are there any hints within Daniel's apocalyptic prophecies of a people reconsecrating themselves for this summation event (like they did on the Day of Atonement)?

In Daniel 7 it is taken for granted that the saints can be recognized (vss 21-22, 27). In Daniel 8 it is concluded that the host and stars which are cast to the ground are God's people (vs 10).

- It is not until the prayer of Daniel (9:3-19) that a reconsecration is noted.
- Then, when Gabriel arrives, what must be done to bring in everlasting righteousness is people-driven.
- The consecration formula is presented in verse 24: *"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, **to finish** the transgression, and **to make an end** of sins, and **to make reconciliation** for iniquity."*

Fast forward to the messages in Daniel 11 and 12. It, once again, assumes that the saints are made up.

- “... *but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits*” (Daniel 11:32b)
- “*And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever*” (Daniel 12:3).
- “*And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of **the holy people**, all these things shall be finished*” (Daniel 12:7).
- “*Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried*” (Daniel 12:10).

The “ritual” of the Day of Atonement had a unique goal – to avert the wrath of God. The holiness of God was recognized. The activities symbolized a complete atonement for sin and utter removal of the cause of God’s displeasure!¹⁹

Fascinating! In the Three Angels’ Messages of Revelation 14:6-11, one of the great focus is on the “*hour of his judgment*” and the wrath of God being poured out without mixture.

Twenty-three hundred Atonement years would pass by – then ***on or after*** (implied in the Hebrew) these years, the atonement process of making things right again would begin. This cannot be ***completed*** until all the sins of the repentant, righteous saints, the holy people, are put onto Satan.

- What will stimulate the ***urgency*** of the final cry, “*the hour*” of His judgment has come (partially, implying God’s wrath) (Revelation 14:7)?
- That is currently a promise that is in waiting – and must be fully understood! It relates to the first four Trumpet plagues, which signal that God’s “*strange act*” has begun. That will be the moment that it becomes clear that the delay in God’s wrath has ceased.
- When those plagues begin, the remnant will already be filled with Godly boldness, flooding the world with its final gospel invitation.

It will be then that wickedness has reached a point where divine intervention can be understood.

It will be then that the saints know that that warning hour has fully come.

It will be then that God’s people will know that deliverance is just ahead, when holiness will be restored.

¹⁹ Feinberg, C. L.; *Atonement* (in *Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, vol. 1, pp. 408-416; Merrill C. Tenney, editor, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI; 1976).

It will be then that “*everlasting righteousness*,” anticipated in the Atonement, is about to occur.

It will be then that the promises in Daniel 8:14 will electrify the saints.

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