

# SCRIPTURE'S MOST IMPORTANT TIME PROPHECIES

## (DANIEL 12 – PART 1)

Structural misunderstanding of timing words and phrases in Daniel 8–12 fragments interpretation of those fundamental prophecies. God gave pointed clues as to how those messages are era bound. Minimizing those divine prompts gives license to speculation. We begin our quest to understand Daniel 12's periods by looking at several such prompts. All of these prophecies are set in a framework of time.

There are three “keys” that help to unlock the “when” in those chapters:

1. Two words for “vision” are used. There is wonderful Old Testament etymologic/exegetic work on the use of those words. In Daniel 8–12 they are used in a uniquely defining way:
  - a. *Mareh (mara)* – refers to distinct themes of **deliverance** for God's people. When they are put together, they tell a story of how and when restoration and peace will finally come.
  - b. *Chazown (ha hazon)* – refers to the **final resistant movements** of Satan and his followers against God and His followers. When these are put together, they also tell a story of an event-driven final period in the “great controversy.”
2. These chapters are future to Daniel. They look forward to three event-filled time periods – distinct and defined.
  - a. A 2300-year block pointing to “when” – at or beyond the *chazown* applies.
  - b. Events related to probationary periods given to develop a holy people – 490 years.
  - c. Events related to a final period of earth's history – three and a half years, called the “appointed time.”

All prophetic issues within these chapters relate to those three periods. No exceptions. There are commentary blocks that are not prophetic. Those relate to the calendars when prophecy, prayers, interaction with Gabriel, etc., are given. They help greatly in the sequence orientation.

3. The metaphors and symbols portray individual and corporate “characters” that act out parts and events within the visions and time periods. These important “persons” or “powers” are repeated often in other prophecies, confirmed by the *parts they act*. Thus, Daniel and Revelation can be linked beautifully. They reveal occurrences that only come in an end-time setting.

The 2300 evenings and mornings (8:14) represent a block of time that must pass before the end of time can consummate.

The story of Daniel 12's calendar is introduced in chapters 8 and 10:

- “Understand, O son of man: for at the **time of the end** shall be the vision.... And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the **time appointed the end** shall be.... wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for **many days**” (Daniel 8:17b, 19 and 26).

- “Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the **latter days**: for yet the vision is for many days” (Daniel 10:14).
- These all relate to the *chazown* visions.
- The giving of the *mareh* vision prophecies was completed (2300 years, 490 years and second personal contact with Christ portrayed as priest, king and judge in Daniel 10). They contain restoration missives relative to both advents.

Gabriel came to Daniel in 10:14 to provide supplemental information to the *chazown* prophecies he has already received.

- “I have come to explain to you” (NIV) – purpose.
- “What will happen to your people” (NIV) – “your people” or “thy people” refers to “everyone that shall be found written in the book” (LXE) (12:1).
- “For the vision” (*chazown*) “concerns a time yet to come” (NIV).

The *chazown* vision had not been fully disclosed. Supplemental material was necessary to “know” **when** this all referred to (Daniel 8:2-13, 17-25). This is key! It could have been partially understood within chapter 8, but Daniel was confused. To help him and us clarify that “when,” Gabriel and Jesus give event-driven warnings (Daniel 11 and 12).

“In the future” (Daniel 8:19, 10:14) is a translation of the Hebrew *be’aharit hayyamim*, usually rendered “in the latter days.” Normally, the phrase describes events that will occur just prior to and including the coming of the kingdom of God ... and Di Lella [Hartman and Di Lella, Daniel, p. 284] considers the expression “clearly eschatological.”<sup>1</sup>

As will unfold – both advents, first and second, are in view. But, as in all prophecy, there is a minor application and an end-of-the-world major application. The concept of this “future” defines events that relate to God’s people. This will be embellished by another expression later called the “time of the end” [*eth (es) qets (qes)*] which relates to the very end of history (cf. 2:28, 8:17).

When the phrases “last days,” “last end” or “time yet to come” are used in both the Old and New Testaments, the context and events reveal how it is to be applied. For instance, in Revelation 1 the timing statements for the **whole book** are found in the words “shortly come to pass” (1:1) and “the time is at hand” (1:3). Unless there was an **event** linked to these, it would be nebulous. However, in 1:7 Gabriel notes “Behold he cometh,” directly associating them with the second advent. Thus, the whole book relates to that period.

Setting the timing framework, Andrew Steinman of Concordia University notes: “The revelation to Daniel will relate [to] ... coming events that will affect God’s people and will culminate in the resurrection of ... the dead” (Daniel 12:2-3).

“Thus the vision is not simply about future world history, but about the eschatological and theological future that culminates in the promised eschatological kingdom of God in Christ, which arrived at his first advent (Mk 1:14-15, 9:1; Col 1:13) and will be consummated at his second advent” (1 Cor 6:9-10, 15:24; 2 Tim 4:1, 18).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Miller, Stephen R.; *The New American Commentary*, vol. 18 (Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), pp. 286-287.

<sup>2</sup> Steinman, Andrew E.; *Daniel* (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis – 2008), p. 504.

Expositor White alluded to the same period: “Let us read and study the twelfth chapter of Daniel. It is a warning that we shall all need to understand before the time of the end.”<sup>3</sup>

Finally, a fascinating and puzzling question is posed to Daniel by Gabriel: “Do you know why I have come to you?” (10:20). He already revealed that purpose (10:14). This rhetorical query is to alert Daniel and us to a phrase in the next verse: “*I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth*” (Daniel 10:21).

This “Scripture” or “Book of Truth” is the only place that is mentioned in the Bible. It is accurately translated, recorded and affirmed in the Dead Sea Scrolls (4 Q Dan).<sup>4</sup> This alludes to a record or book that God has written beforehand of world history and destiny.<sup>5</sup> This seems to echo the seven-sealed scroll message of Revelation 5–6 and 8:1. There, God the Father had recorded and sealed the destiny of the world, waiting for the Lamb to open it and begin judicial review. That book required a “worthy Lamb” to unseal and read. Here is given the “preface” to its contents.

### **Gabriel’s Review Session**

Gabriel is privy to at least the purpose and meaning of that Book of Truth. Of the seven-sealed scroll, it is noted: “*And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon*” (Revelation 5:3). By the time of the end it was complete and sealed. This elevated angel is about to share the proleptic appearance of nations vitally important to ancient Israel and extremely apropos to the last generation to live on earth. The “destiny” and judicial review is for Christ to unfold when those Seals are broken (Revelation 6–8).

Gabriel’s narrative that follows is a fascinating look at key future events that will occur during the prophecies already unfolded in chapters 7 to 9. These are reviewed in depth in *EndTime Secrets of Daniel 8–12*, in the three chapters on Daniel 11 (posted on [endtimeissues.com](http://endtimeissues.com) under “Books.”

Briefly, the structure of Daniel 11 is as follows (this will help us later to move smoothly into Daniel 12):

1. Verse 1: Orientation as to when the audition was given.
2. Verses 2-20: Key national leaders who would arise during the 490-year period. These would serve as timing warnings of the ever-shortening probation left for Israel. Intriguingly, their probation actually ran out **before** that period ended (Matthew 21:43, 23:37-38). A three and a half year period remained for God to see a people address sin and have everlasting righteousness come. A holy people had not been shown to the universe. That is a legal necessity in the judicial battle with Satan. In addition, that period will end when the sanctuary (in heaven and symbolically with God’s people) is “anointed” (Daniel 9:24) or cleansed.
3. Verses 21-28(29): The first rise of the papacy with key world events. This ties to Daniel 7.

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<sup>3</sup> White, Ellen G.; *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 15, p. 228 (1903).

<sup>4</sup> Collins, John J.; *Daniel* (Fortress Press, Minneapolis, MN – 1993), p. 376.

<sup>5</sup> Miller, *Op. cit.*, (quoting Keil), p. 289.

4. Verses (29)30-45: The second rise of the papacy. This is divided into two parts, exactly as the book of Revelation is. There is a part where its church/state wielding of power begins to emerge, and a terminal portion where it is a world power. This ties to Daniel 8 and part of 9.

God is riveting deeply into our understanding detailed issues and events that affect His people. First, the Jewish nation, secondly those in the early Christian church and, finally, the greatest emphasis is on the last generation to live on earth. These are prophecies of warning to prepare. But in correctly anticipating what lies ahead, it reveals that God's mercy has a time limit. A time of trial is soon to come to God's people unmatched in earth's history. This discourse gives insight as to its nature. As it progresses, God's door of probation shuts – forever, all occur during a tribulation period.

- “A time of trouble **such as never was**” (Daniel 12:1)
- “Then shall be great tribulation, **such as was not since the beginning of the world ... nor ever shall be**” (Matthew 24:21).
- “Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those **things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken**” (Luke 21:26).
- When Michael (Jesus) stands up (Daniel 12:1), all moral and spiritual decisions are completed.

“The great controversy between good and evil will increase in intensity to the very close of time. In all ages the wrath of Satan has been manifested against the church of Christ; and God has bestowed His grace and Spirit upon His people to strengthen them to stand against the power of the evil one. When the apostles of Christ were to bear His gospel to the world and to record it for all future ages, they were especially endowed with the enlightenment of the Spirit. But as the church approaches her final deliverance, Satan is to work with greater power. He comes down ‘having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.’ Revelation 12:12. He will work ‘with all power and signs and lying wonders.’ 2 Thessalonians 2:9. For six thousand years that mastermind that once was highest among the angels of God has been wholly bent to the work of deception and ruin. And all the depths of satanic skill and subtlety acquired, all the cruelty developed, during these struggles of the ages, will be brought to bear against God's people in the final conflict. And in this time of peril the followers of Christ are to bear to the world the warning of the Lord's second advent; and a people are to be prepared to stand before Him at His coming, ‘without spot, and blameless.’ 2 Peter 3:14. At this time the special endowment of divine grace and power is not less needful to the church than in apostolic days.”<sup>6</sup>

This *chazown* message doesn't end until Daniel 12:4. The chapter break is unfortunate. We will begin our Daniel 12 study with those few verses. To set the stage we must look briefly at the key points of the second rise of the papacy (chapter 12 refers back to them – Daniel 11:30-45).

They highlight the antichrist's attitude [“vile person” – “king of the north”] and his activities.

1. He is against God's covenant and thereby His law (vss 30, 32)
2. The true Sabbath will be removed and replaced by a false one (vs 31).
3. God's people will be active (vss 32b, 33a).

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<sup>6</sup> White, Ellen G.; *The Great Controversy*, pp. ix-x.

4. God's people will be persecuted (vs 33b, c).
5. All this will come at the "appointed time" at the "time of the end."
6. The antichrist's key characteristics include dishonoring women (vss 36-38)
7. The final rise to world power is highlighted in verses 40-45. There, the antichrist is called the "king of the north." He is involved military and has focused interest in Palestine and world economics. He fears the news of the success of God's people (vs 44). But he comes to his end (vs 45). The antichrist is often referred to as "he" in verses 40-45. It will be an important "he" link in the next chapter.

### **Preface to the Most Important Timing Prophecy in Scripture**

We now begin with chapter 12 – still finishing the *chazown* (*ha hazon*) vision through verse 4.

***“And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book” (Daniel 12:1).*** Let's review some of the key words and phrases.

*“At that time”* refers back to the previous verses and more specifically to verse 40's timing statement: *“at the time of the end.”* This refers to the time of the antichrist<sup>7</sup> and, specifically, when he has become a world power (11:40-45).

*Michael “stands up.”* Though not part of this article, Michael is Jesus Christ. The Hebrew is translated in many Bibles as “will arise” (NIV, LXE, NET, NAS). A heavenly task is completed. He superintends over events at the very “time of the end.” This is a transition in Christ's role. A similar transition is portrayed in Revelation 5 and 6, where He takes the scroll from God, seated on His throne, and breaks the first seal. That begins another transition in time. “Standing up” here prepares for its final phase.

“When our High Priest has finished His work in the sanctuary, He will ***stand up***, put on the garments of vengeance, and then the seven last plagues will be poured out.”<sup>8</sup>

But an assurance message comes to God's people:

*“Standeth for the children of thy people”* means He is preparing to do a special work for the saints [seated on throne → standing].

“There shall be a time of trouble” when Christ changes His normal place – the world's greatest tribulation or ***“time of trouble”*** begins. Our legal divine advocate (I John 2:1), our “great high priest,” interceding for us (Hebrews 4:14-16) ceases that advocacy role. Man's probation is over. God's people will be given a special rescue mission called ***“deliverance.”*** Special protection comes to them at this time.

***“Deliverance”*** comes to all who are ***“found written in the book”*** (12:1). This references the Book of Life (Exodus 32:32, Isaiah 4:3, Psalm 69:29). Christ confirms this record of citizens (Luke 10:20). He notes that all those who are victorious (over sin) will be in that book

<sup>7</sup> Steinman, *Op. cit.*, p. 559.

<sup>8</sup> White, Ellen G.; *Maranatha*, p. 258.

(Revelation 3:5; cf. I Corinthians 15:57, I John 5:4). Those who are not there will be destroyed by fire (Revelation 20:15). The sequence of events that has emerged to this point:

<u>11:30-39</u>	<u>11:40-45</u>	<u>12:1</u>	<u>12:1</u>	<u>12:1</u>
Antichrist rises in religious power (identified previously as the "vile person")	Antichrist becomes world secular power ("king of the north")	Michael/Christ ceases priestly advocacy role	Tribulation "Jacob's Trouble" (Jeremiah 30:7)	God's people "delivered" – specially protected

Another concept that is introduced with Michael standing up reveals that it is when Christ's victory over Satan is complete.<sup>9</sup> This occurs when one of his chief loyalists – the antichrist papacy – passes off the scene (Daniel 11:45).

The final prophetic events cover an "appointed time" (Daniel 8:19) that will be shown to be "time, times, and an half" (Daniel 12:7). The "casting out" or restricting of Satan's activities by Michael leads him to realize his "time is short" (Revelation 12:12). There follows a three and a half times (Revelation 12:14) review of the persecution of the "woman"/church. All these verses share the exact same message.

### The Final "Time of the End" Event

***"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:2).***

*"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake," (vs 2)*

This is the only **specific** reference to a resurrection in the Hebrew Bible that affirms eternal life that follows.<sup>10</sup> BUT – it is alluded to in others!

**"Dust"** is used in association with Sheol in Job 17:16 – or the grave.

- This echoes Isaiah 26:19: "The dwellers of the dust shall awake and shout for joy."
- The language of sleeping and awakening – death and resurrection – is used in II Kings 4:31, 13:21; Jeremiah 51:39, 57; Job 14:12.

The Sadducees apparently minimized these verses as a strange mythological metaphor.

- Goldingay, a contemporary scholar (2008), also calls it a "flight of the imagination."
- Job passionately said: *"And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God"* (Job 19:26).
- *"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness"* (Psalm 17:15; cf. Isaiah 26:19, Psalm 16:11).

<sup>9</sup> Whitcomb, John C.; *Daniel*, p. 161.

<sup>10</sup> Collins, *Op. cit.*, p. 392.

“Sleep in the dust” suggests these individuals have experienced the first death, had been buried and now arise – are resurrected.

“some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt” (vs 2)

The text suggests that it is not a universal resurrection. Many call this a “special resurrection.” John records that at the second coming “they also which pierced Him” will see Him come in the clouds (Revelation 1:7). That appears selective. Some of His persecutors will be resurrected to witness the second coming.

The “universal” resurrection is presented in messages such as Matthew 25:31-46, John 5:28-29, I Corinthians 15:52. There appears to be a select group raised at or immediately after the “deliverance” of God’s people to witness the anticipated second advent.

For the righteous who are resurrected, it is to “everlasting life” (cf. Psalm 133:13). For the wicked, “everlasting contempt.” Since Satan and his minions are eventually destroyed by fire (Revelation 19:20, 20:10), this activity is a “special” resurrection to witness the return of Christ in the clouds. “*They will look on the one they have pierced*” (John 19:37, quoting Zechariah 12:10; cf. Revelation 1:7). But their end will be eternal.

The next two verses (3-4) draw to a close the *chazown* narrative. The moral imperative to know prophecy will be addressed and the dictum that an understanding of this prophecy will not occur until the very end of time is presented – both crucial issues!

### Hope through Knowing – Prophetic Orientation

**“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).**

The word “**wise**” (*maskilim*) is translated in a variety of ways. Here, the implication is “the one who pays attention will have insight.”<sup>11</sup> These expressions dealing with “wisdom” or the “wise” have eschatological orientation (i.e., Revelation 13:18). It is an allusion to understanding “*He that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit says.*” These are insights that the saints will have.

The blessing that comes from understanding is the gift that they will “**shine with brightness**” as in the sky. They will be witnesses to these truths that will draw the world’s attention. This is the prophecy that John ate (Revelation 10:10), when he was told to prophesy again (10:11). “John sees the little book unsealed. Then Daniel’s prophecies have their proper place in the first, second, and third angels’ messages to be given to the world. The unsealing of the little book was the message in relation to time.”<sup>12</sup>

This new verse elevates the theme of hope to a high plane. We’ve heard terrible stories of war, rebellion and persecution from the “*vile person.*” Daniel 11:30-45 saw the “*king of the north*” in conflict with God’s covenant and His people and in rebellion against the Sabbath. Near the end came the amazing war between the king of the north and the king of the south.

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<sup>11</sup> Steinman, *Op. cit.*, p. 561; Thayer on *Sakal*.

<sup>12</sup> White, Ellen G.; *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 19, p. 320 (1906).

The witnessing message is noted in the final phrase of this prophecy. This was alluded to in the previous chapter – “*who have insight will make many understand*” (11:33); “*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*” (12:3). These will be stars that shine forever. In a later metaphor Jesus noted that “*the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father*” (Matthew 13:43).

The imagery of light finds many illustrations in the Bible. Jesus declared: “*I am the light of the world*” (John 8:12). Then this statement: “*As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world*” (John 9:5). That responsibility would be transferred to His followers: “*Ye are the light of the world ... let your light shine*” (Matthew 5:14, 16).

Now comes the concluding thought and a request from Gabriel with it. All the imagery related to the *chazown* vision **must be sealed** from understanding until a **point in time**. Then begins our journey into the deeper issues of Daniel 12.

***“But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased” (Daniel 12:4).***

This is a heavenly imperative. The “*scroll*” is apparently written. It is to be sealed until the “*time of the end*.” That implies it will be unsealed at that period! This is an amazing issue that many fail to comprehend. **Until that point** is reached, no scholarly work or expositor’s insight could break open the meaning of the *chazown* vision. That vision began in 8:1 and has been sequentially unfolded through this verse.

“The words of the angel to Daniel relating to the last days were to be understood **in the time of the end**. At that time, ‘many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.’”<sup>13</sup>

A sealed text was not to be tampered with or changed. Jeremiah 32:9-12 talks about sealing a deed for a piece of property that Jeremiah purchased. It is not to “hide” its contents but to preserve it. In this prophecy the meaning was to be “preserved” until the “*time of the end*.”<sup>14</sup> It was done to **protect the rights** of God’s people when it would apply.<sup>15</sup>

#### **“shut up the words, and seal the book,” (vs 4)**

It is intriguing that God did not seal the scroll – Daniel did. He wasn’t totally happy about that, as we will see. By his doing this, the record remained unaltered until the seal was finally broken. “*Close up the words*” means it can’t be understood. “*Seal the scroll*” means access to the prophet’s message was barred.

Daniel’s prophecy was for the distant future (John’s revelation, however, was to be speedily fulfilled – Revelation 1:1, 3; 22:6).<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> White, Ellen G.; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 234.

<sup>14</sup> Miller, *Op. cit.*, p. 320.

<sup>15</sup> Gaebelien, Frank E.; *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 7 (Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI), 1984, p. 153.

<sup>16</sup> Jamison, Robert; Fausset, A. R.; and Brown, David; *Jamison, Fausset, and Brown’s Commentary on the Whole Bible* (12:4), 1871.

Expositor E. G. White identified this “closure” also as a barrier to understanding: “The book that was sealed was not the book of Revelation, but that portion of the prophecy of Daniel which related to the last days. The Scripture says, ‘But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and **knowledge shall be increased**’ (Dan. 12:4). When the book was opened, the proclamation was made, ‘Time shall be no longer [delayed].’ (See Revelation 10:6.) The book of Daniel is now unsealed, and the revelation made by Christ to John is to come to all the inhabitants of the earth. By the increase of knowledge a people is to be prepared to stand in the latter days.”<sup>17</sup>

The “*time of the end*” concept was first introduced in 8:17, 19. It is when the eschatological antichrist will begin his deceptive spell on the earth. This relates to the final generation that is unfolded in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21. When did that begin? At the onset of the “*time of sorrows*.” The most sophisticated data center on calamities in the world is the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED). It is located within the School of Public Health of the Universite Catholique de Louvain (UCL) in Brussels.<sup>18</sup> They noted that in the 1976–1978 window an exponential curve developed for significant world calamities. That statistical trend appears to date the onset of the “*time of sorrows*” (Matthew 24:8) when all the issues Christ listed have begun mathematically together as a trend.

These data strongly suggest that Christ’s first phase of end-time prophecy is now underway. Commensurate with that, for over three decades, all over the world, individuals are writing and teaching an end-time application of Daniel 8–12, which would fulfill the unsealing of that “*book*.” This insight is not focused in one geographical area or by any “*special group*” of individuals. Prophecy is being fulfilled. The “*time of the end*” has been underway for nearly a “*generation*.”

“*Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased*” (Daniel 12:4b)

The rest of this verse is dynamic with incredible information. At “*the time of the end*” knowledge would be increased and men would “*run to and fro*.” This is unrelated to the exponential increase in world technical information. It relates solely to the understanding of ***this prophecy!*** Men will go “*back and forth*” to investigate and gain knowledge about this ancient Danelic writing (cf. Jeremiah 5:1, Zechariah 4:10, Job 1:7, 2:2; II Corinthians 16:9).

If uncommitted to end-time truth: “*Men will stagger from sea to sea and wander from north to east, searching for the word of the LORD, but they will not find it*” (Amos 8:12 – NIV).

The “*running to and fro*” suggests intensity and eagerness to know. The promise that knowledge will increase tells clearly that the search for truth will be rewarded.

See Appendix I.

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<sup>17</sup> *Selected Messages*, bk 2, p. 105 (1896) (emphasis added).

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.emdat.be/natural-disasters-trends#>