

SCRIPTURE'S MOST IMPORTANT TIMED PROPHECIES

(DANIEL 12 – PART 2)

Two Witnesses at the River

The visions called the *chazown* (*ha hazon*) are completed in Daniel 12:4. That composite was/is a preface to greater revelations in how the end will be choreographed. It unveils the most intense conflict earth will ever witness between good and evil. What now follows is a judicial scene where Christ appears personally the third time before Daniel. Each debut is marked by a **timing missive**. Urgency is instilled into the prophetic messages because they are embedded in **time**.

Immediately preceding the appearance of the Divine Man, Daniel observes “two others.”

“Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river” (12:5).

Scholars note that these “two” serve as witnesses to the oath that Christ will soon take. In the Law of Moses a minimum of two such individuals were required for a case to proceed (Deuteronomy 4:26, 17:6, 19:15, 30:19, 31:20). That law applied only to criminal cases. But – we will shortly see Christ telling us when the great case of highest treason against the government of heaven will be “wrapped up.”

Since Daniel now resumes a first person narrative, it is probable that he is one of those witnesses. “*One of them*” asked Christ questions. Daniel appears to be the questioner and the one eager for understanding (12:8). This is affirmed by this expositor: “A wonderful connection is seen between the universe of heaven and this world. The things revealed to Daniel were afterward complemented by the revelation made to John on the Isle of Patmos. These two books should be carefully studied. Twice Daniel inquired, How long shall it be to the end of time? [Daniel 12:6, 8]”¹

These witnesses are on the banks on either side of a river. Though it is tempting to identify this as the Tigris, the last river noted (Daniel 10:4), the “*above the waters*” imagery of 8:16 is replicated. It is at the Ulai River, to the east, where the deliverance messages originate. The genre of the *mareh* visions invites the identity of this unnamed river to be the Ulai – symbolic of the 144,000, who bring earth’s final deliverance message. Christ is here preparing them for the final “conquering work” that will go throughout planet earth (depicted in Revelation 6 as the white horse – first seal).

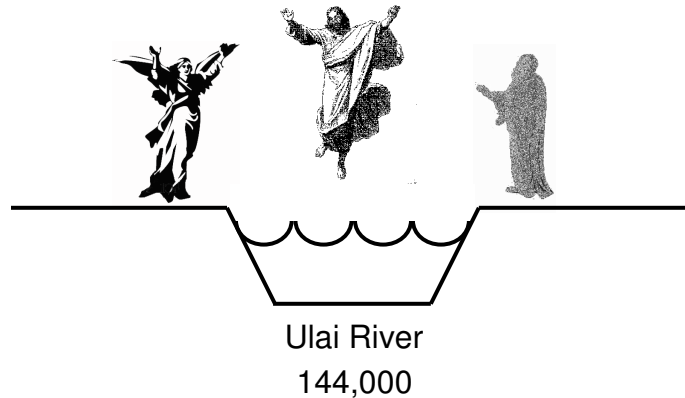
The word here for river (*yeor*) is used in a variety of ways in the Old Testament. Though anciently referencing the Nile River, it does tie to an eschatological context in Isaiah 33:21. There, it is associated with Jerusalem, representative of God’s people on Mt. Zion at the end (cf. Revelation 14:1).²

¹ White, Ellen G.; *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 115-116 (1896).

² Collins, John J.; *Daniel* (Fortress Press, Minneapolis, MN – 1993), p. 399.

The next verse is pivotal to this chapter. It is the catalyst to understand the expression “*time of the end*” and its *time* prophecies.

“And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?” (12:6).



“One of them” is Daniel. He writes similarly as John the Revelator, mixing third and first person commentary. Within two verses: “*I, Daniel, looked*” and “*before me*” ... “*one of them said.*” When Jesus speaks, “*I heard him.*” Daniel, clearly, is an auditory and visual witness to this solemn scene.

The “**man clothed in linen**” is identified as Christ by many scholars³ – especially by the words “*clothed in linen.*” The word “*clothed*” (*labesh*) refers to *totally clothed* since “*white linen*” is plural. This usually refers to the High Priest’s dress on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:4) and is described here in chapter 12 and Daniel 10:5 (cf. Ezekiel 9:2-3, 11; 10:2, 6-7). This is Christ in a High Priestly mission. Note: In chapter 10 He was king, priest and judge. Here, the imagery is only as priest. What could that mean? Let’s analyze.

A final Atonement is in view. Prophecy is being unfolded when the last preparation for eternity is about to occur. That event is noted also in Revelation 8:3-5. The images presented by both Daniel and John are of the same period. His identity is with those who sigh and cry for the sins of the people (Ezekiel 9:4). They will be marked with the “cross shaped” *taw* on their foreheads, noting their eternal security.⁴ The Ulai “people” (cf. Revelation 17:15) are being addressed. They are spiritually ready.

Elsewhere in Daniel Jesus is called “*the Prince of the host [arms]*” (8:11), the “*Prince of princes*” (8:25) and “*Michael*” (10:13, 12:1). Many incorrectly identify Him in chapter 12 as the pre-incarnate Christ. This, however, relegates the prophecy to a pre-advent fulfillment. The imagery is “*time of the end*” – eschatological – and identifies Christ in a post-ascension role as our High Priest (Hebrews 9:11).

The phrase “**upon the waters**” (vs 6 and repeated in vs 7) denotes “over or above the waters,” symbolizing “protection over.” It is not imagery like that of Christ with one foot upon the sea and the other on the earth (Revelation 10:2; cf. Revelation 17:15). That indicates

³ Miller, Stephen R.; *The New American Commentary*, vol. 18 (Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), p. 322.

⁴ Steinmann, Andrew E.; *Daniel* (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis – 2008), p. 497.

“dominion over.” Above the water (people of the Ulai – God’s special people, the saints, the remnant, the 144,000) means He is over, caring for, instructing those individuals. What He is about to say is for them, for their edification and guidance for us.

Our High Priest, our Intercessor, is protecting His end-time people and is about to present to them one of Scripture’s most important and hopeful prophecies – the most important *time* prophecy in the Bible. It is conveyed directly seven times in the Scripture to rivet its unparalleled importance, and many more ways in labels such as “*appointed time*.”

Daniel Converses with Jesus

In chapter 8 Daniel heard Jesus and Gabriel conversing (8:13-14, 16); in chapter 10 he saw and heard Jesus (10:5-8); here in Daniel 12 he not only sees and hears but is privileged to ask Him questions.

“And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?” (12:6).

“The light that Daniel received from God was given especially for these last days. The visions he saw by the banks of the Ulai and the Hiddekel, the great rivers of Shinar, are now in process of fulfillment, and all the events foretold will soon come to pass.”⁵ What Jesus answers is future to when that was written.

The question that Daniel poses is exactly the same as the one Gabriel conveyed to Jesus in 8:13: “**How long?**” (*ad-matay*). *Ad* – “how is it continuing into the future?;” *matay* – “when?” Together, it is summarized as “until when.” “The question is not ‘How long will it be **before** these things take place?’ but ‘How long will they continue when they begin to occur?’”⁶ The setting for this expression would be totally nebulous **unless** there is a qualifier. This is an important eschatological concept. There are many end-time periods within prophecy. Even Christ’s discourse in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21 talks of a “*generation*” (40 years). When predictive events begin, “how long” will they go on? Or when the period supervenes, “what then?” Those end-time “generational” discourses talk of a beginning (Luke 21:28, 32) and an ending (Luke 21:34, 27).

Daniel does add two qualifiers here in 12:6! The words “**end**” and “**wonders**.” This embellishes the meaning of *ad-matay*! The word for “end” is *qes*. This usually refers to a judicial end. Something legal is to be completed. Daniel is asking “*when*” that will occur contextually. A Day of Atonement is key to Daniel 8–12. “*Wonders*” (*pelaot*) is a feminine plural noun and refers to **God’s acts of judgment and redemption**.⁷

“Wonders” is preceded by an article, revealing that it alludes to something specific and precise! What divine acts were noted in the previous verse and prophecy? – (1) The **deliverance** of God’s people and (2) **a special resurrection** (12:1-2) – define the plural word “**wonders**.” These two events are judicial acts. They reflect a response to a prior judgment. Something has

⁵ White, Ellen G.; *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 112-113 (1896).

⁶ Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 322.

⁷ Steinman, *Op. cit.*, p. 565.

occurred and ended to permit these happenings! *Pelaot* is found only here as a unique Hebrew expression in the Old Testament.⁸

Daniel's concern especially relates to **when** this period of time (*ha hazon* vision of satanic opposition to Christ and His people) will end with the deliverance of those saints and that special resurrection. "The phrase looks toward the final events of history and the end of the world at the return of Christ."⁹

When Daniel asked "*Until when*" will the deliverance and special resurrection *end*? – he implied the full period of events which extended from 11:29 to 12:3. By looking at those two terminal events, they encompass the sweeping final apocalyptic events of the antichrist to his demise (11:45) and the divine summation (12:1-3) of the controversy with evil.¹⁰

Jesus now takes center stage. He begins a crucial series of timing prophecies that define the details of that terminal period. We now enter the most important end-time prophecy in Scripture. Satan knows that. Resistance to an end-time understanding of this chapter is filled with more emotion and hostility than any other in Scripture. As we will see, these periods are sacred and in an aura of utmost solemnity as they unfold!

Daniel sees High Priest Jesus above His people. Now He speaks:

"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" (12:7).

Once again Daniel is excited enough at what is occurring that he asserts to his readers: "***I heard the man clothed in linen.***" – i.e., "What you are about to study is really true. I saw Jesus and talked with Him. He actually spoke these timing prophecies to me!" What caused this fascinating assertion (while again repeating the "*man clothed in linen*" description) is related to what Jesus did. This is Daniel's narrative:

"And swore by him that liveth for ever and ever" (vs 7)

Daniel heard him *when* he took that oath, invoking God's name [*"him that liveth for ever"*] (Revelation 10:6) – an appropriate expression of God the Father (Deuteronomy 32:40, I Timothy 6:16).¹¹

This is a fascinating and most sacred event. One God invoking the name of another God as a guarantor of what He is about to divulge! Can anything in the universe have a greater endorsement than this? What Christ is about to declare, every thinking being should understand and grasp! He is about to reveal when the great controversy will end (not the Second Coming) and gives the assurance that there will be a ***holy people!***

⁸ Lucas, Ernest C.; *Daniel* (Intervarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL; 2002) p. 296.

⁹ Steinman, *Op. cit.*, p. 564.

¹⁰ Lucas, *Op. cit.*, p. 296.

¹¹ Whitcomb, John C.; *Daniel* (Moody Press; Chicago, IL - 1985), p. 165.

Two witnesses are observing divine certification proceedings over the waters of the Ulai River – people of the east – who will be responsible to bring earth’s final deliverance message to mankind.

This ties directly to Daniel 8:14 and 9:24, Revelation 10 and 11 (specifically 10:6) and the amazing oath in Hebrews 7:21, promising that a Melchizedekian priesthood would be established (see at endtimeissues.com – “Called to a Higher Order” under Articles button). A prophetic phenomenon is about to unfold. Beyond the promises of the Cross came a painful delay of 2000 years. Prophecy helps to fill in the emotional delay/gaps with pristine assurances that there will be an end to sin. Daniel 12 is one of them! This is one of redemption’s great promises in the Old Testament!

“he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven” (12:7)

Lifting up the right hand is an oath (“solemnly swear”) of promise to be truthful (Genesis 14:22, Deuteronomy 32:40, Ezekiel 20:5-6, Revelation 10:5-6).

It was a Biblical custom to raise only one hand (Genesis 14:22, Deuteronomy 32:40, Isaiah 62:8, Ezekiel 20:5, Revelation 10:5-6) in an oath.¹²

That led to the idiomatic phrase “to lift up the hand” – meaning “to take an oath” (Psalm 106:26).

- Putting a hand under the thigh of another was a way to swear against the life of all future seed (Genesis 24:2, 47:29).
- The Jews later inappropriately swore by their head – a mental assent – in the name of heaven, earth, Jerusalem and the temple (Matthew 5:34-36). Jesus didn’t like that and expressly forbade it.

When the left hand is raised, it is an oath offering the individual’s blood. The left relates to **loss of life** in many symbols.

1. Christ’s declaration (Matthew 25:31-33, 41). “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.... Then shall he say also unto them **on the left hand**, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” They were to experience the eternal death.
2. In the general purification ritual, the ashes of a red heifer were used (Numbers 19:2-10). When it was slaughtered, the blood was received into the left hand and transferred to the right, when it was then sprinkled towards the Holy Place (Jewish history). From impure to pure, appealing to God’s presence – preventing, by this transference, eternal death.

¹² Tenney, Merrill C.; *Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, (Zondervan; Grand Rapids, MI), vol. 4, pp. 477-478 (1937).

3. In demon mythology and Satanism today, the oath is with the left hand – with a death association, i.e., loss of life. In the Inquisition Lyrics (2002), invoking the majestic throne of Satan, the left hand is used, appealing to Lucifer’s blood.¹³

Jesus is saying by this act: “I pledge my blood to validate that this will occur.” Can you grasp what is happening?! Do you perceive the stunning imagery that those divine Beings, who are over all, are staging?! In redemptive prophetic history we are admonished to look at and beyond Calvary. The blood shed on that day **continues** its power. Its cleansing and purification will eventually be complete in a “holy people,” when everlasting righteousness comes in. That is what is being decreed here!! That blood cleanses – prepares the saints for eternity! This will all culminate during the time periods in Daniel 12!

“And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” (Revelation 7:14, 12:11). The left-hand oath confirmed that High Priest Jesus would shed His blood as a judicial “eternal death” gesture so that we can symbolically wash our characters in that divine “detergent.” Whiteness and purity are the outcome.

“And they overcame him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death” (Revelation 12:11). Our blood became meaningless in light of His sacrifice. His life for ours leads to eternal life!

The theological issues in this one Danelic act are deep and profound. Christ shed His blood to assure the deliverance of God’s people and the resurrection of the saints. The imagery is that of a great judiciary summation of redemption. It will occur – the highest court has ruled. There are witnesses. It is also set within, as is all apocalyptic prophecy, a framework of time. That adds urgency to our understanding.

There is precedence for God swearing by himself (Genesis 22:16) and even by His holiness (Psalm 89:35). Interestingly, God likes promises made in His name. In fact, He commands it. *“Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name”* (Deuteronomy 6:13; cf. Isaiah 18:19).

“Sware” is *shaba* – His left hand is up. It, in reality, means to **bind** oneself by an **oath**. It is directly related to *sheba*, which means seven, God’s perfect number. In Genesis 21:22-34 Abraham sealed an oath with seven ewe lambs. Out of this came an elevated ancient saying: To take an oath was to “seven one’s self or bind one’s self by seven things.”¹⁴

Stunning is this judicial ordeal that accompanies what Christ is about to say.

- He is telling us, “I’m going to let you ‘test’ the validity of what I’m going to tell you.”
- If I die and am raised, the timing prophecy that I will give will be utterly, 100%, unequivocally true!

Jesus (the Man in linen) and God (the Eternal) are called in together in a **validation ceremony** of a **timing prophecy!** Is that powerful – or what?

¹³ <http://www.darklyrics.com/lyrics/inquisition/invokingthemajesticthroneofsatan.html>

¹⁴ Harris, R. Laird; *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol II, p. 900.

- Why would such imagery accompany a prophecy – a timing prophecy? The end of the controversy with sin is framed within those timing periods. It is what gives urgency to the Loud Cry. Like Noah’s 120 years that ended with the flood (but deliverance was provided for him and his family), so Jesus’ specific timing of three and a half years ends with the deliverance of His people!

Jesus is “severing” Himself against the perfect name of God that this is true. Sin will have an end when it occurs. It will be glorious for the saints.

The Old and New Covenants are based upon such promises of God. Daniel 11 notes that the King of the North will have indignation against the holy covenant (vs 30). He will do wickedly against the holy covenant (vs 32). Why? When it is given to the saints, Satan will be defeated.

NOW – we come to the time when Jesus describes ***what He guarantees. This is what the validation ceremony is all about!***

Timing Prophecies

“it shall be for time, times, and an half” (12:7)

Whenever there is a vital timing prophecy, Jesus (not Gabriel) personally gives it to Daniel.

“The prophetic periods [time segments – plural] of Daniel extending to this very eve [shortly before] of the great consummation [Second Coming] throw a flood of light on events then [future] to transpire.”¹⁵

Daniel 12 is “*end of time*” and encompasses the “last scenes of this earth’s history [last generation].”¹⁶ Jesus said previously that this would be after the 2300 years (Daniel 8:14, 17, 19). Gabriel called it the “*appointed time*” (*moed*) (8:19). Gabriel had asked when it will *begin*; Daniel asked when will it *end*! Key!

Remember the question? Daniel is wanting insight into a period of time that ***ends*** with deliverance and the special resurrection: ***“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). That “*it shall be*” is a pointed response to Daniel’s question “*until when will this vision end?*” – “*It shall be.*”

“*Time, times, and an half* [a time]” is similar to the phrase of 7:25. This is often referred to as the “appointed time.”¹⁷ The meaning for both is three and a half “times.” In Daniel 7 the words are in Aramaic. There, *iddan* is used. That has many connotations, but usually refers to the generic word *time* or to *one year*. There are problems in that verse relative to that word because it is plural. But – the story is vastly different in Daniel 12. The word is *moed*.

Examples of how it is used:¹⁸

¹⁵ White, Ellen G.; *The Review and Herald*, September 25, 1883.

¹⁶ White, Ellen G.; *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 114-115 (1896).

¹⁷ Brown, Driver and Briggs, *Lexicon*.

¹⁸ Harris, *Op. cit.*, pp. 388-389.

- Birth of a child (Genesis 17:21, 18:14, 21:2)
- Season of a bird's migration (Jeremiah 8:7)
- Appointed time (I Samuel 13:8, 20:35)
- Time a vision is intended (Habakkuk 2:3)
- Time of the end when a vision was unfolded (Daniel 8:19).
- Time for a festival (Leviticus 23:2); collectively, *moade (moedim)*
- Time of solemnity (Deuteronomy 31:10)
- An appointed sign (Judges 20:38)
- Place of worshiping or assembly (Isaiah 14:13, 74:4) – *har moed* – mountain of assembly

When *hag moed* is used, it refers to the three “great feasts.” When *ohel moed* is used, it refers to the place of meeting or tent of meeting. In the context of Daniel’s use of *moed*, it refers to:

1. When the vision is intended
2. An appointed time God has predetermined –
3. At the end of time

In this setting, the final restoration of God’s people is in view. *Moed*, in this context, ties to the Day of Atonement – an annual feast day when God’s people are delivered and become holy. Those ancient Jewish feasts were also prophecies of how the “ends” (First and Second Advents) would unfold.¹⁹

In Daniel 8:17 Gabriel told Daniel to “*understand*” that the vision (*ha hazon*) would be for the “*time of the end*” (*es qes*). There, he clarified even further what that meant: “*for at the time appointed the end shall be*” (8:19). What word is used for “*time appointed*”? *Moed!* Now we get further clarification through Jesus that the “*appointed time*” for all these prophecies is a three and a half annual Atonement cycle of three and a half years.

In spite of all the daily, weekly, monthly (on new moons) sacrifices, sin had not been fully atoned for²⁰ until the time when this time applies!

- This reflects the highest exhibition of the High Priest’s work. It is the time when sins are legally atoned for and removed.
- It is when deliverance finally comes to God’s people.
- It is **the** great festival day of fasting that has survived in Judaism as the day of cleansing – or purification.
- It is a “Sabbath of solemn rest” (Leviticus 16:31, 23:32), “Sabbath of a Sabbath,” in which no work was allowed (Numbers 29:7).

If “*time*” (*moed*) here represents the appointed time of Atonement, and it does, it is annual (Exodus 30:10) – a solar year. It is a specific period of time each fall.

Combining Daniel 8:19 and 12:7, we find:

¹⁹ White, Ellen G.; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 399-400.

²⁰ Tenney, as quoted in Harris, *Op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 413.

- At the end of time, there is an appointed time when holiness/cleansing comes in. It occurs during, and lasts, an “appointed time,” “appointed times” and “half an appointed time.”
- A year, two years, half a year or three and a half years.

Daniel’s timing question as to when it ends has been answered. Jesus wants to refine the events of these periods further. That will be in our next study. We can now begin to see why there are so many three and a half year periods in Revelation.

See Appendixes III and IV in preparation to Part 3 of this study).

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