

Insights In Prophecy

Unlock The Ancient Mysteries Of Daniel & Revelation

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8

LESSON

Lesson 8

THE GULF WAR CRISIS: THE BEGINNING OF SORROWS

Read Daniel 8:1-9; 11:1-4

- Discover Which Gulf Crisis Leads Up To The Appointed Time Of The End
- Identify The Two Islamic Countries Involved In The Middle-East Turmoil

In Daniel 7 we discovered the "four winds" (four angels) of Heaven stir up the great sea of peoples, and out of this divine movement emerges four governmental beasts: Lion with Eagle's Wings (United Kingdom/United States); Bear (Russian Federation); Leopard (China and Asian Countries); and Terrible Beast with Ten Horns (Western European Union). From the Terrible Beast will emerge the "little horn" (Vatican) whose Pontiff will reign for a "time, times and dividing of time" (Daniel 7:25)—meaning, 1,260 days/3½ years.



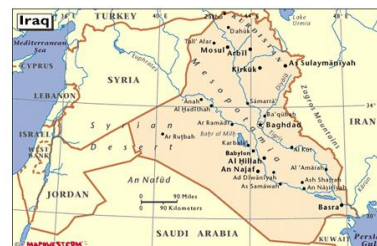
In Daniel 8 we rediscover the four winds and the emergence of the little horn in verses 8-9. However, new events are now depicted, which were not found in Daniel's first vision (chapter 7). Two conflicts will ensue *before* the New World Order emerges and the Papal leader miraculously rises to power. Where are they located? These are issues we will answer in this study.

Daniel's second vision of the last days (chapter 8) comes to him a couple of years after the first one, recorded in Daniel 7. The prophecy was similar to the first one, he says. In the vision he finds himself beside the Ulai Canal or River, which would indicate the region near the Persian Gulf in Old Babylon close to the border between Iraq and Iran, where the two great rivers meet—the Tigris and Euphrates.

Two-horned (Islamic) Ram

1. What kind of animal does Daniel see (8:1-4)? _____

The prophet saw a Ram with two horns and one horn was larger than the other and emerged last. The Ram charges to the west, north and south and becomes powerful. The Ram represents Islam and the two notable horns of this prophecy depict two prominent Islamic countries. The horns are different sizes; a smaller horn sits next to the larger horn with the larger horn clearly representing the dominant of the two nations.



Daniel is in vision and finds himself at Susa. Modern Susa is about 100 miles north of the Persian Gulf in Iran, near the border of Iraq. Michael instructs Gabriel later in the chapter to explain the vision to Daniel (vs. 15-16). Animals represent significant geographical powers and horns in prophecy portray prominent nations in that alliance/area to which Heaven asks us to pay attention. Daniel is told the two on top of the Ram horns are two powers that would battle against Western powers, referred to in the prophecy as the Goat from the West.

2. What time in human history is the vision going to be fulfilled (Daniel 8:7-19) according to Gabriel? ____

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Gabriel confirms twice, in order to add emphasis, the confrontations conveyed in the vision concerns the "time of the end." However clear this may seem to point to the last days, commentators have applied the vision to historical battles over 2,000 years ago around 331 B.C. This would be an application of the prophecy at best, but certainly not the fulfillment. We are nearing the end of time; and, for this reason, we will look at the world today and consider what nations might be represented in the vision.

3. According to Daniel 8:20, to whom does Gabriel associate the two-horned Ram? _____

Media and Persia.

As mentioned, the location of Daniel's ancient vision occurred near what would be today's Iraq and Iran border; therefore, by simple deduction we can conclude that Media refers to modern Iraq, and Persia to modern Iran—a country whose name was changed from Persia to Iran less than 100 years ago in 1935. The dangerous Ram representing Islam is an animal representing a sizeable geographical area (nations in green map). The Islamic Ram of nations surrounds Israel and the Israel is Islam's primary foe. Islam is charging to the "the west and the north and the south" as it compresses upon Israel's borders from all sides, but east Mediterranean. The two prophetically identified modern-day horns (Iraq and Iran) of the Islamic Ram sit in the same geographic area of Israel's historical enemies—ancient Babylon and Persia. It's as though the ancient conflicts are replaying again at the end of days; however, it's the larger horn that is given the lion's share of attention, prophetically speaking; and, Israel is assured her most zealous enemy—Iran will collapse under the military might of the West.



Another prophet—Jeremiah long predicted the massive downfall of Persia in the latter days, known in the Scriptures as Elam: "The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet against Elam, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, saying, "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Behold, I will break the bow of Elam, the foremost of their might. Against Elam I will bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and scatter them toward all those winds; There shall be no nations where the outcasts of Elam will not go. For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies and before those who seek their life. I will bring disaster upon them, My fierce anger,' says the LORD; 'And I will send the sword after them until I have consumed them. I will set My throne in Elam, And will destroy from there the king and the princes,' says the LORD. 'But it shall come to pass in the latter days: I will bring back the captives of Elam,' says the LORD," (Jeremiah 49:34-39; NKJV).



Goat Coalition

4. Daniel 8:5 says a Goat with a prominent horn (country) comes from what direction to confront Iraq followed by Iran? _____

The Goat comes from the west from a great distance and at a remarkable speed to deal with the two-horned ram—Iraq, followed by Iran.

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5. How successful is the Goat in dealing with these two countries (vs. 6-7)? _____

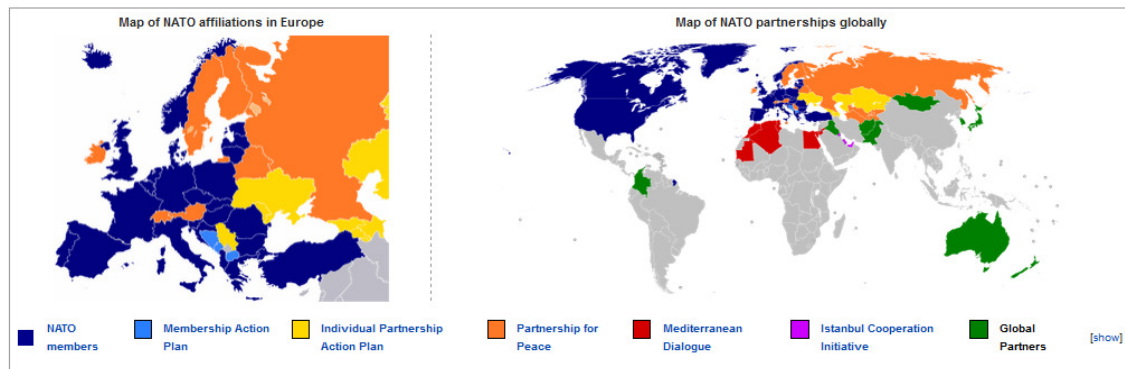
The two horns will be shattered. So strong is the Western Goat that he tramples the two-horned Ram with speed and power. First the smaller horn (Iraq), followed later by the larger horn (Iran).

Daniel 8:21 identifies the powerful Goat and the "horn" as the first king (first in standing—the most powerful). The translators identified the Goat as "Greece" which in Hebrew is actually "Yawan" ("Javan"). Javan was one of the sons of Japheth (Genesis 10:2), and at the writing of Daniel, Javan implied much more than one specific nation but massive powers from the west. Since the vision concerns the time of the end, it would be reasonable to identify the Goat as a coalition of western European powers and their military partners, including Greece, with the prominent horn as the first king in power—NATO.

Wikipedia says, "The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO; also called the North Atlantic Alliance) is an intergovernmental military alliance based on the North Atlantic Treaty which was signed on 4 April 1949. The organization constitutes a system of collective defense whereby its member states agree to mutual defense in response to an attack by any external party. NATO's headquarters are in Brussels, Belgium, one of the 28 member states across North America and Europe, the newest of which, Albania and Croatia, joined in April 2009. An additional 22 countries participate in NATO's Partnership for Peace program, with 15 other countries involved in institutionalized dialogue programs."

For more info, visit <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NATO>

Participating countries



The First King—United States Of America

The large horn—the first king (first in power) and the most prominent in western strength in the NATO alliance—no doubt represents the United States. On March 19, 2003, President George W. Bush, 43rd President of the United States, along with other mainly western powers (the Multi-National Force—coalition forces) attacked Iraq. The bombardment began on Shushan Purim, the annual day of celebration in Jerusalem commemorating Israel's triumph over ancient Persia's attempt to annihilate God's people. Iraq was defeated in relative speed, just as the prophecy predicted, although skirmishes continued until the war's official end on December 18, 2011, just as Hanukkah celebrations were beginning. The second and larger horn—Iran, will "come up last" (Daniel 8:3). The West will, as a continuation of this prophecy, confront the Persian Iran, which conflict will likely start with Israel's strike. And, we may see Iraq again

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pulled back into the conflict when Iran is attacked; but, in the end we know both Iraq and Iran fall victim to the power of the Western Goat coalition, with catastrophic consequences for the Persian Gulf region.

We know because prophecy foretells the Western Goat with the notable horn (America) will furiously attack the Islamic Ram, striking the Ram and shattering his two horns. Daniel adds, "The Ram (Islam) was powerless to stand against him; the [Western] Goat knocked him to the ground and trampled on him, and none could rescue the Ram [Islam] from his power."

6. The West will successfully defeat the two-horns of the Islamic Ram. However, after the victory over Iran, what happens next (Daniel 8:8)? _____

When America and the NATO Coalition are basking in the glory of their decisive conquest, prophecy depicts the next major surprise: the prominent horn will be broken off.

The three following passages point to America's demise: "The first was like a lion [Britain], and had eagle's wings [U.S.]: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked," Daniel 7:4. "Therefore the he goat [Western Coalition] waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn [America] was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven," Daniel 8:8. "And a mighty [U.S.] king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up," Daniel 11:3-4.

Prophecy does not specify how America's departure as the world's superpower comes about. Washington, D.C. edifices and/or New York financial district may be destroyed without warning, leaving the U.S. without political strength; global financial markets could be in a spiral; social unrest will increase; and, unforeseen events will explode upon the world scene. From the Iranian conflict forward, prophecy warns that natural disasters will increase, including massive earthquakes. Tidal waves and high winds may buffet and destroy; America's vast military will endure great losses. Nuclear armaments may explode upon America's soil. In a very short segment of time millions of lives could be destroyed. The American horn will be broken and her position of authority will diminish. World War III will certainly erupt; however, this will be a very short but decisive period of global holocaust as America's power, along with many other nations, is broken and dispersed toward the four winds around the world.

Yeshua warned that these and other events were just the beginning of terrible events and should not to be interpreted as the end of the world, according to Matthew 24:6-8: "You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains."

Satan, the ruler—the prince and power of the air (Ephesians 2:2), is much more formidable than our minds can envision. He will unleash his calculated and deadly plan, and demand his forces of evil go to work (Ephesians 6:12). Nations will erupt one against the other with military confrontations, sparking social unrest. As global turmoil mushrooms, the population of Planet Earth will beg for a solution. Revelation 13 speaks of a false prophet given demonic power to perform miraculous signs involving fire (lightning?) from the sky. Added to the desolation of war, Satan could harness nature's elements and unleash environmental fury to bring the nations to his feet, humbled and ready for the Man of Sin—the false savior. Devastation will increase on both land and sea; Revelation 12:12 warns, "Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short."

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7. Read Daniel 7:2-4. How does it describe the emergence of the four world powers and the demise of America's supremacy? _____

The four winds (four angels) of Heaven stir up earth's powers. The Lion (Great Britain) with Eagle's Wings (America) is one of the prominent four government coalitions. However, Daniel watched as the Eagle's Wings were "torn off." The United Kingdom/United States alliance will no longer fly free and swiftly. America will be humbled, so that the Man of Sin may come into view with strength and clarity. The world's mighty leader will emerge from the Western European Union, while the United State's dominion will be lost forever.

The Little Horn—The Mighty Ruler

8. Daniel 8:9 portrays the emergence of a "little horn," which will come out of one of the four larger powers that spread out in the four directions of the world—particularly the Western European Union. What is the smallest country in the world? _____

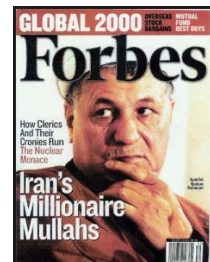
The Vatican sits on just 109 acres, but will emerge as the leader of the world. Although the smallest of nations, the Holy See will rise to power, first taking control of nations to the east and south, then eventually the Beautiful Land, Israel (Daniel 8:9; 11:16).

The southern and eastern directions of new power indicate that the countries in these two directions from Rome, Italy, may be the ones devastated by Russia when the Bear attacks the Western Europe Union (as covered in Lesson 4). The Bear will have "three ribs" in its mouth when it rises to devour much human flesh (Daniel 7:5), representative of the "three... horns" (three countries) uprooted and destroyed just as the little horn (Vatican) comes into power (Daniel 7:8). Of particular concern should be Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece, although we do not know with absolute certainty which three countries the Bear will most shatter.

Fourth Persian King

Returning to the conflict that will ignite end-time events and World War III, Daniel's fourth and last vision provides even more details concerning the Persian Gulf confrontation with Persia (Iran). We find these details in Daniel 11:2, where we see the same powers and events as Daniel 8—Persia (Iran), Greece ("Javan"—western powers), a confrontation (Gulf War), and a mighty king and empire (United States), which will be broken and her power divided and parceled out to the "four winds".

Persia, whose name—as mentioned earlier in this lesson—was changed to Iran in 1935, was ruled by empires and dynasties. However, political revolution led to a major realignment of power and the *Islamic Republic* was established in Iran on April 1, 1979. A Constitution of the Islamic Republic was approved by national referendum in December, 1979. Iran now had *elected* leadership, a clear transition from the past. This ushered in the conditions for the end-time predictions of Daniel 11 to become reality. One key religious leader in the development of the Islamic Republic became the fourth and one of the most influential leaders in Iran—the wealthy Hojatolislam Ali Alvar Hashemi Rafsanjani.



9. According to Daniel 11:2, the prophet wrote that in the "latter days" there will emerge in Persia (Iran) three kings; however, the fourth Muslim leader would be different in what way? _____

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The fourth shall be far richer than the previous three.

"Now then, I tell you the truth: Three more kings will appear in Persia [Iran, in the latter days], and then a fourth [Rafsanjani], who will be far richer [wealthy man] than all the others. When he has gained power by his [personal] wealth, he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece ["Javan"—Greece; and the West]," Daniel 11:2.

Persia's Presidents

The first four Iranian presidents emerged just as the prophecy foretold, with the fourth far richer than the others.

1st ... Abolhassan Bani-Sadr. Ruled ... 1980 - 1981

2nd ... Mohammad Ali Raja'i Ruled ... 1981 - 1981

3rd ... Sayed Ali Khamenei Ruled ... 1981 - 1989

4th ... Hojatolislam Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani Ruled 1989 – 1997

Although no longer the reigning President, Rafsanjani, the richest mullah in Iran, has not faded into obscurity. His influence remains strong as one of the most powerful figures in Iranian politics, leading two top clerical bodies in recent times—the Assembly of Experts and the Expediency Council. In December, 2001, Rafsanjani openly threatened Jews when he said a single atomic bomb has the power to completely destroy Israel, while an Israeli counterstrike can only cause partial damage to the Islamic world. Rafsanjani, the political father of Iran's nuclear energy program, ran again for the presidency in July, 2005, but the man he lost to, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, continued to ratchet up messianic rhetoric, calling into question the Holocaust and seeking the demise of Israel and America. However, the emphasis of prophecy falls on Rafsanjani, and his powerful, long-standing sway in Iranian politics will lead Islam to war. Some consider him a front-runner to replace the supreme leader of Iran, Grand Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. His part in the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy will become clearer as final events begin to unfold, as well as Israel's involvement, if any, in initiating this conflict. Born in 1934, Rafsanjani is 80 years old; therefore, since he is to be the fulfillment of this prophecy, the shortness of time is clearly established.



Wikipedia says, "**Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani** (Persian: **اکبر هاشمی رفسنجانی**, *Akbar Hāshemī Rafsanjānī*, **Hashemi Bahramani** **هاشمی بهرامانی**, born August 25, 1934) is an influential Iranian politician and writer, who was the fourth President of Iran. He was a member of the Assembly of Experts until his resignation in 2011. Currently, he is Chairman of the Expediency Discernment Council of Iran. During the Iran–Iraq War Rafsanjani was the *de-facto* Commander-in-Chief of the Iranian military. Charismatic, he had a gift to simplify complex tactics and was an ingenious and pragmatic commander. Rafsanjani was elected Chairman of Iranian parliament in 1980 and served until 1989. Rafsanjani also served as President of Iran from 1989 to 1997. In 2005 he ran for a third term in office, placing first in the first round of elections but ultimately losing to rival Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in the run-off round of the 2005 election... He is considered to be the richest man in Iran.

The West will soon confront Iran—possibly at Hanukkah or Purim, or a totally unforeseen point. This conflict will occur due to Iran's Islamic ties to terrorism and their pursuit of the nuclear bomb; along with the ayatollah's continued threats against Israel. When this conflict arises (Daniel 8:1-7), we can be assured the appointed end-time crisis is at hand. Once ajar, the door of prophecy can never be shut. Mayhem will reign, and the world will never be the same.

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When Might The Iranian Conflict Begin? The Hanukkah Connection to Overcoming Israel's Enemies

Conflict can erupt at any time; however, there are two watch periods that should be considered—Hanukkah and Purim. In the centuries before the birth of Jesus, the people of Israel and Jerusalem had been held under years of tribute to various conquering kings. One of these ruling monarchs was Antiochus, one of the Seleucid Kings who reigned in Syria. Resistance finally arose against Antiochus. Under the leadership of the Maccabees, the people of Jerusalem overthrew Antiochus and his pagan practices in 166 BC. The Syrians and their Greek religion were driven out, and the altar was rebuilt. The Temple was cleansed, restored, and rededicated to the service of Yahweh. It was decreed there should be eight days of celebration, with rejoicing and gladness, to mark the re-dedication of the altar, to remember the victory, and to recount the miracle of the supply of oil that lasted through this period.

Hanukkah begins each year at the end of 24th day of the ninth Hebrew month of Kislev, as the 25th day begins, which fluctuates on the Gregorian calendar each year (e.g., December 24, 2016; December 12, 2017), and continues for eight days. Israel is surrounded by hostile enemies—Syria, Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, and distant foes such as Iran, Iraq, Libya and others. The prophet Haggai spoke prophetically of events in his day *and* trials of the last days—that God was about to bless Israel with eternal blessings by overthrowing the nations and military might of Israel's enemies who surrounded them, including Damascus (Isaiah 17); thereby, extoling Israel with miraculous victories and enlargement of their territory, as God promised long ago. There will no doubt be major military showdowns with Israel's enemies as the end-times begin. The enlargement of Israel's territory is a continuation of God's blessings that began almost 100 years ago with the Balfour Declaration on November 2, 1917. Forty days later the Turks surrendered Palestine to the British during World War I, on the 24th day of Kislev (December 9, 1917). These historical events set in motion the restoration of Davidic sovereignty over the Holy Land that came to fruition through the United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine in late 1947, the events on May 14, 1948, and the War of Independence that ended in 1949, stirring the anger of Israel's enemies. Now, we are on the verge of Middle East war that will mushroom into immense tragedy, with unimaginable loss of life.

Still under the grip of King Darius and the Persia Empire in 520 BC, Haggai the prophet wrote, "Now *give careful thought* to this from this day on—consider how things were before one stone was laid on another in the LORD's temple... 'From this day on, from this *twenty-fourth day of the ninth month* [the eve of Hanukkah], *give careful thought to the day... Give careful thought... "From this day on I will bless you."* The word of the LORD came to Haggai a second time on the *twenty-fourth day of the [ninth] month*: "Tell Zerubbabel governor of Judah that I am going to shake the heavens and the earth. I will overturn royal thrones and shatter the power of the foreign [Gentile] kingdoms. I will overthrow chariots and their drivers; horses and their riders will fall, each by the sword of his brother," (Haggai 2:15, 18-22).

In Zechariah 4—the chapter of candlesticks, lamps, light and oil—we also find the theme of Hanukkah's light. We read, "*Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the LORD of hosts,*" (Zechariah 4:6). In this chapter God revealed two olive trees and two lampstands—"the two who are anointed to serve the Lord of all the earth," (Zechariah 4:14); "*And I will appoint my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth.*" They are "*the two olive trees*" and the two lampstands, and "*they stand before the Lord of the earth,*" (Revelation 11:4)—known elsewhere in the Scriptures as Moses and Elijah.

In 2010, Israel experienced the driest November in decades, and there were formal prayer vigils at the Western Wall just before Hanukkah. The arsonist forest fire on Mt. Carmel—the worst in Israeli history claiming 44 deaths—represents a *prophetic foreboding of fiery and destructive events that will come upon Israel and Jerusalem*. Mt. Carmel is mentioned some 25 times in the Bible, signifying its importance. On

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Mt. Carmel Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18) after a long three and one-half (3½) years of drought. The 2010 drought and the fiery destruction just before Hanukkah may signify far greater tragedies Israel will soon face; and with it, the return of the great prophet Elijah. "I will send My messenger, who will prepare the way before Me. Then suddenly the LORD you are seeking will come to His temple; the Messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty... "I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes," (Malachi 3:1; 4:5).

Hanukkah, also known as the Feast of Dedication (John 10:22-24) and Festival of Lights, was not part of the original Festival seasons Yahweh gave to the Israelites; nor is Purim, as recorded in the Biblical book of Esther. However, God inspired both of their celebrations for His divine purposes. In addition to the seven Festival events of Leviticus 23, both Hanukkah and Purim were instituted to commemorate God's miraculous power, protection and mercy over Israel's enemies. Both remind Jews of victory over tyranny, and God's provision for His people—past, present and future, during the appointed time of the end.

The Purim Connection to Overcoming Israel's Enemies

According to the Book of Esther, Haman, royal vizier to the Persian King Ahasuerus, planned to kill all the Jews in the empire, but his plans were foiled by Mordecai and his adopted daughter Queen Esther. This deliverance then became a day of feasting and rejoicing (Esther 9:1, 17). Purim's historical significance, which originated in Iran in Esther's day (480 BC) when Jews won victory over their Persian foes, also foretells and forewarns of various conflicts Israel will have with modern-day Persia (Iran), which will initiate the appointed times counting periods and will continue during the final days.

"The cheerful heart has a continual feast," says Proverbs 15:15. Judaism teaches there are *two constants* that faithful Jews have longed for down through the centuries. First, "feasting continually," as illustrated in the Purim celebration; and second, the "continual," or "*tamid* offerings" offered twice daily at Jerusalem. Although Israel's arch rival Iran will be defeated, as will Syria and Israel's other surrounding enemies during the modern-day uprising foretold in Psalm 83, celebration over Israel's decisive victories will be transitory. "Daily" worship at Jerusalem's Western Wall will be taken away. Therefore, during the appointed time of the end, Jews will long for the day when Jerusalem can be rebuilt and worship can be restored at the Western Wall, and can begin anew in the rebuilt Temple on the Holy Mount after centuries of delay and expectation.

Purim/Shushan Purim is preceded by *Taanit Esther*—the Fast of Esther. The Torah prescribes that whenever a Jewish army goes to war, the soldiers should spend the previous day fasting. This is in stark contrast to a secular army which spends the day preparing weapons and armaments. The Purim chorus is sung: "*Utzu etzah, vetufar; dabru davar, velo yakum; ki Immanuel*," derived from the book of Isaiah. It is from the Hebrew text of God's warning to Israel's allied enemies, which are in partnership to wipe this people from the face of the earth: "*Devise your strategy, but it will be thwarted; propose your plan, but it will not stand, for God is with us*," (Isaiah 8:10).

Purim Katan is another watch period; it is known as the lesser Purim. This celebration occurs during a leap year when there are two months of Adar (Adar I & Adar II), on the 14th day of the Hebrew month of Adar I (typically a February celebration) about one month prior to Purim. Purim Katan is a mirror reflection of Purim, has some of the characteristics of a festive day, and is akin to preparation for Purim. In fact, starting at Purim Katan, Jews begin to contemplate the meaning of Purim that is just four weeks away, and the great deliverance of Israel that it marks. Purim Katan represents salvation from catastrophes, destruction, evil and oppression—particularly as it recounts Israel's historic victory over their Persian enemy.

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Once the Middle East erupts—the Persian Gulf conflict between the U.S. led coalition and Iran, along with Israel against her surrounding enemies, we can know with certainty the appointed end-time crisis is upon us. Israel’s dominance will increase, eventually leading to the placement of the foundation stone for the Third Temple in Jerusalem. After the Middle East explodes, World War III will follow in quick succession. We will fear the end of civilization as we know it; but Jesus warned, “You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but *the end is still to come*. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. All these are *the beginning* of birth pains,” (Matthew 24:6-8). Once ajar, the door of prophecy can never be shut. Mayhem will reign, and the world will never be the same.

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