

“THE END”

Daniel 12:1-13

We’ve come to the end of this Spirit-inspired book. At this point Daniel is an old man nearing the end of 70 years of ministry for God. He is over 80 years old and perhaps pushing almost 90. Daniel started well and he ended well. Daniel’s God is our God too. He is still on the throne. This may be the most important lesson of the book. God is in charge! Simple and clear.

- **He is in charge of nations, families, and individuals.**
- **He is in charge of the past, the present, and the future.**
- **He is in charge of good times and bad times.**
- **He is in charge of happiness and heartache.**
- **He is in charge of great victories and shocking defeats.**
- **He is in charge of your birth and your death.**

Studying this book, as we have done, should increase our confidence in the sovereignty of a God who knows EVERYTHING and makes zero mistakes. In Daniel’s world, God was in control. In our world, God is in control. What a comfort it is to know that we are not subject to blind fate! I love what Alan Redpath said. . .

There is nothing—no circumstance, no trouble, no testing—that can ever touch me until, first of all, it has gone past God and past Christ right through to me. If it has come that far, it has come with a great purpose which I may not understand at the moment. But as I refuse to become panicky, as I lift up my eyes to Him and accept it as coming from the throne of God for some great purpose of blessing to my own heart, no sorrow will ever disturb me. No circumstance will cause me to fret. For I shall rest in the joy of what my Lord IS—that is the rest of victory!

Imagine standing on the shore, gazing at the horizon where the sky meets the earth. Beyond what you can see lies a reality far greater than your imagination. This

is the eternal horizon of God's plan for humanity. In this final chapter of Daniel, we will confront a truths that many Christians prefer to dodge—the judgment of God, the resurrection of the dead, and the eternal destinies of all people. It's a sobering reality, but one that is also filled with hope. Understanding these truths shape our eternity. They transform the way we live today. As disciples of Jesus Christ, our lives are to be lived with eternity in view. I want to encourage you to:

**LIVE KNOWING THAT YOU ARE GOING TO DIE AND
DIE KNOWING THAT YOU ARE GOING TO LIVE FOREVER!**

In chapter 12, we come to the end of Daniel's fourth and final vision. This rather long vision began in chapter 10, and it reaches its climax in this chapter. In chapter 11, the angelic messenger gave Daniel a historical outline dealing with the rise of Greek Empire and the recurring battles between Syria and Egypt. According to one scholar, there are 135 details in verses 1-35 that have been fulfilled completely.

Beginning in verse 36 of chapter 11, we came face-to-face with the beast, the man of lawlessness, the Antichrist himself. In the last verse of chapter 11, this evil world leader is eliminated at the Battle of Armageddon.

Daniel 11:45... "He will come to his end, and no one will help him."

Chapter 12 opens with the final reign of Antichrist's terror still in view. If you will remember, Jesus called this final 3¹/₂ years of the tribulation, "THE GREAT TRIBULATION." It's a time of trouble like nothing that's ever preceded it. It's a time of unbelievable suffering for the Jewish people and for those who have believed in the Lord Jesus.

1. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE END TIMES

Up to this time, the angel's message has been rather bleak, but now in chapter 12 there is a breakthrough for God's chosen people. The deliverance of Israel, Daniel's "people," refers not to individual salvation, though a remnant will be saved, but

rather to national deliverance from subjugation to the Gentiles.¹ We are introduced to Michael, the angelic prince who is the protector of Israel (Rev. 12). The time period is the Great Tribulation. . .

Daniel 12:1... “Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands *guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued.*”

Michael is called the archangel in Jude 9. He leads a victorious war against Satan and his angels (demons) in Revelation 12:7–12. Michael is, as are all angels, a ministering spirit “sent out to serve those who are going to inherit salvation” (Heb 1:14). He no doubt is ministering to God’s people today, but at the “time of distress” (Dan 12:1) or “the time of the end” (12:4, 9, 13) he will intensify his involvement on behalf of the people of God. To Daniel and his readers, I believe this referred to the righteous remnant of Israel, “the holy people” (12:7).²

“A time of distress”— This reference to the “Great Tribulation” is also mentioned in the following passages. . .

Jeremiah 30:7... ‘Alas! for that day is great, There is none like it; And it is the time of Jacob’s distress, But he will be saved from it.

Matthew 24:21... “For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will.

“At that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued”— What a terrible time this will be. Here is a reference to the “Book of Life” and the rescue of the godly remnant of Israel. This is the book of life found in Revelation 20. . .

¹ J. Dwight Pentecost, [“Daniel,”](#) in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1372.

² Daniel L. Akin, [Exalting Jesus in Daniel](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), 160.

Revelation 20:11–15...Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. **12** And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. **13** And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one *of them* according to their deeds. **14** Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. **15** And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

John Piper stated, *“The joy of heaven will far outweigh all the fleeting pleasures of this life, and the torment of hell will reveal the seriousness of rejecting God’s grace.”*

Daniel 12:2... **“Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.”**

Every person who has ever lived will be resurrected from the dead. No one can escape God’s judgment! Tim Keller wrote . . .

“The reality of judgment is the single greatest motivator for ethical and holy living. It’s not fear alone, but the hope of final justice that gives life meaning.”

There will be a separation of the righteous and the unrighteous.

John 5:28–29... “Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, **29** and will come forth; those who did the good *deeds* to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil *deeds* to a resurrection of judgment.”

The resurrection of believers martyred in the Tribulation will occur at the second coming of Christ (Rev. 20:4, “they came to life and reigned with Christ 1,000 years”).

The unbelieving dead, however, will be resurrected to “everlasting contempt” and torment at the end of the 1,000-year reign of Christ (cf. Rev. 20:5; John 5:28–29).³

Daniel 12:3... “Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.”

“Those who have insight will shine brightly”— This most likely refers to those who will be saved during the tribulation period and will teach others the truth in the midst of great danger! Who are God’s stars?

- **The parent who patiently teaches his/her children about Jesus.**
- **The office worker who leads a Bible Study.**
- **The son who witnesses to his parents.**
- **The coach who shares the gospel with his players.**
- **The friend who tells his buddies about Christ.**
- **The young couple who serve as missionaries.**

Those who tell others about Christ will still be shining ten thousand years from now.

“Those who lead many to righteousness”— These are the soul-winners who live and share the gospel during the great tribulation.

Daniel 12:4... “But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase.”

Notice, the angel tells Daniel that these prophetic words would be authenticated and sealed until the end of time. I believe the angel is referring to the New Testament era. The words “man will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase” refers to the eager desire to understand prophecy. Stephen Miller puts it clearly and simply:

³ J. Dwight Pentecost, [“Daniel,”](#) in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1373.

As the time of fulfillment draws nearer, the “wise” will seek to comprehend these prophecies more precisely, and God will grant understanding (“knowledge”) to them. (*Daniel*, 321)⁴

2. THE DURATION OF THE END TIMES

In verses 5–9 the vision shifts as two other angels join Gabriel, who has been talking to Daniel. They stand opposite each other on the banks of the Tigris River (cf. 10:4). Next, “the man dressed in linen” (cf. 10:5–6) appears again “above the water of the river” (12:6). This is most likely the angel Gabriel (others think He is the glorious Son of God, robed in his priestly purity).⁵

Daniel 12:5–6... Then I, Daniel, looked and behold, two others were standing, one on this bank of the river and the other on that bank of the river. 6 And one said to the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, “How long will it be until the end of these wonders?”

An angel asked “*the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river*”—**“How long will it be until the end of these wonders?”**

Daniel 12:7... I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, as he raised his right hand and his left toward heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half a time; and as soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people, all these events will be completed.

These end time scenarios will last for 3¹/₂ years. When evil has done its worst and the hopes of the Jewish remnant seem to be shattered, then God will act. The grim work of the oppressors will roll on and on and on. But at the appropriate moment God will intervene.⁶

⁴ Daniel L. Akin, [*Exalting Jesus in Daniel*](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), 164.

⁵ Daniel L. Akin, [*Exalting Jesus in Daniel*](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), 165.

⁶ Daniel L. Akin, [*Exalting Jesus in Daniel*](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), 165.

Daniel 12:8... As for me, I heard but could not understand; so I said, “My lord, what will be the outcome of these events?”

Daniel must have been mortified. He didn't understand all the intricacies of this prophecy. Hey, I'm not a prophecy expert. Here's a principle we need to employ when we study the prophetic Scriptures. . .

**Don't ever focus on what you don't understand.
Always focus on what you do understand!**

Daniel 12:9... He said, “Go your way, Daniel, for these words are concealed and sealed up until the end time.

Daniel, you have received all you are going to get, and it is enough. This prophecy and its understanding will become clearer only “as God unravels history in the unseen future” (Ferguson, *Daniel*, 229). Everything will happen as God intends at the right time. Be faithful. Trust him. Be patient. As Dr. Rogers said:

“God is never late, and he is never early. He is always right on time!”

Here's an amazing passage. . .

Daniel 12:10... “Many will be purged, purified and refined, but the wicked will act wickedly; and none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand.”

When it comes to the future, there are things we can know and things we don't know and can't know because God has chosen not to reveal them to us. One thing is certain. God will see to it that the things related to our redemption come to pass. In those days of great tribulation, He will see to it that. . .

- ***“Those whom he will raise to everlasting life” (v. 2)***
- ***His “bright and shining ones” (v. 3)***
- ***His “holy people” (12:7)***
- ***“will be purified, cleansed, and refined” (v. 10)***

However, the wicked will experience something altogether different. . .

- ***“The wicked will act wickedly”***
- ***“None of the wicked will understand”***

Look at the last phrase in verse 10—“But those who have insight will understand.”
They will understand the times and will know what to do!

3. THE DELIGHT OF THE END TIMES

Daniel 12:11–12... “From the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days. 12 “How blessed is he who keeps waiting and attains to the 1,335 days!

Look at the reference to *“the abomination of desolation”* (Matthew 24:15, 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4) in verse 11. Dale Davis commented on this . . .

Verse 11 is speaking of the repression of true worship (*the regular offering ... taken away*) and the imposition of false worship (*an appalling abomination*). . . . I think Jesus has Daniel 9:27 and Daniel 12:11 in view when he refers to the “abomination of desolation” in Matthew 24:15. (*Message of Daniel*, 166–67)

Notice the reference to 1290 days in verse 11 and 1335 days in verse 12. These specific numbers affirm God’s sovereign control over the details of history. Things will move ahead as he has decreed, and things will also end as he has decreed. There is wonderful hope and assurance even if there remains a bit of mystery concerning the particularities.⁷

Daniel 12:13... “But as for you, go your way to the end; then you will enter into rest and rise again for your allotted portion at the end of the age.”

The book concludes with a personal word for Daniel from the Lord— “Go your way to the end.” The day was fast approaching when the Lord would bring him

⁷ Daniel L. Akin, [*Exalting Jesus in Daniel*](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), 167.

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home to glory. Then, he would receive his well-deserved rest and reward for a life of faithful service to the Lord!