

Daniel 12

- Gabriel's prophecy continues from the end of Chapter 11, directly into Chapter 12 and still set in the same moment of the future

Dan. 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.

Dan. 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.

Dan. 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.

- It's important to note how Chapter 12 begins: with a time reference tied to Chapter 11
 - The events of this chapter are "at that time"
 - The time is the time of Tribulation, as the antichrist rises to power and then is defeated
 - We could say, "in those days"
 - It is then that Michael, a great prince or angel, will arise
 - Interestingly, he's identified as the angel assigned to guard the people of Israel
 - As a great prince, Michael seems to be the highest angel
 - And therefore, it's noteworthy that the Lord has assigned his highest angel to protect the people of Israel
 - The arising of Michael implies he moves to accomplish something God has planned
 - He arises to bring the Age of the Gentiles to an end, so that Israel may be returned to her place of glory
 - And the first order of business for the angel is to battle against the antichrist and his forces
- But v.1 isn't strictly speaking of a single battle, but rather, it's describing the entire period of Tribulation

- This period is a time of destruction and distress unparalleled in human history
 - This fact alone proves that the period described in Chapter 11 has yet to happen
 - For were it describing events of the past, we could say that worse things have come since (e.g., WWII, etc.)
- But Gabriel says that Michael's rise for Israel happens in an unprecedented period of distress for the nation
 - But we also know from Daniel 9 that this seven-year period was decreed against Israel for six reasons that are all to Israel's benefit
 - It leads to glory for the people of Israel, since it brings Israel back into the bond of the Covenant
 - And this permits God to grant the people His promises of the Kingdom
- Therefore, the end of v.1 says that many of Daniel's people will be rescued
 - To be rescued could mean many things, but v.1 makes clear the context of rescue
 - Those who are rescued are those who are found "written in the book"
 - This book here is the Book of Life, the book in which are inscribed the names of all who will inherit eternal life
- The book is mentioned in various places in the Bible, particularly in Revelation

Rev. 3:5 'He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the **book of life**, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

Rev. 20:15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the **book of life**, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

- The Book of Life holds the names of all those who are saints and destined for eternal life in the Kingdom

- But those whose names are not found in this book are the unbelieving, the damned
- Obviously, the book holds the names of both Jew and Gentile
- In this case, we're talking about Daniel's "people", which refers to Israel
 - So Gabriel says those who are found in this book are being rescued in these difficult days
 - Therefore, to be rescued would mean to be saved eternally
 - It's an indication of a person coming to salvation during these difficult days
 - Revelation tells us about the evangelistic power of Tribulation

Rev. 7:1 After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, so that no wind would blow on the earth or on the sea or on any tree.

Rev. 7:2 And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea,

Rev. 7:3 saying, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads."

Rev. 7:4 And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:

Rev. 7:9 After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands;

Rev. 7:14 I said to him, "My lord, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

- An army of 144,000 Jewish men are brought to faith in Tribulation by God's grace
- And they then become His servants to bring the Gospel to an uncountable number of Jew and Gentile
- Furthermore, at the end of these days, the Lord will save the remaining Jews on earth, all those in the book of life

- At Christ's Second Coming, all remaining Jews on earth are saved

Rom. 11:25 For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery – so that you will not be wise in your own estimation – that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in;

Rom. 11:26 and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written,
 “The Deliverer will come from Zion,
 He will remove ungodliness from Jacob.”

Rom. 11:27 “This is My covenant with them,
 When I take away their sins.”

- The covenant that promises all Israel salvation is the Old Covenant
- The final act of Tribulation will be to bring Israel back into the bond of that Covenant, so they may receive the Kingdom
- Gabriel is speaking of this group when he describes the great rescue at the end of Tribulation
- Then after they are spiritually saved, the Lord takes the final step of bringing these saints new bodies
 - In v.2, we're told that many of Israel who “sleep” in the dust of the ground will awaken
 - To sleep means to die, to be without a body
 - At death, the body of a saint enters the grave, while the spirit continues to exist in full consciousness
 - That spirit awaits a new body in a day to come, at the time of the resurrection
 - So Gabriel describes the moment of Israel's resurrection as an awakening of those in the dust of the ground to everlasting life
 - The Church saints were resurrected before Tribulation began, at a moment commonly called the Rapture
 - But the saints who died prior to Pentecost are not the Church...they are Old Testament saints
 - So Gabriel says the OT saints receive their new bodies at the end of Tribulation

- Gabriel says “many” awaken to everlasting life, while others awaken to everlasting contempt
 - Within Israel, there are those who believed and those who didn’t
 - Just as today, we have those who are saved by faith and those who aren’t
- But all people are resurrected in the end
 - Notice that those in the Book of Life have everlasting life, while those who are not have everlasting contempt
 - Both groups have an everlasting existence
 - The only question is where we live eternally: Heaven or the Lake of Fire
- Revelation 20 says that the resurrection of the righteous throughout history takes place prior to the Kingdom
 - The Church is resurrected before Tribulation, while the OT saints are resurrected after Tribulation
 - Both groups are resurrected before the Kingdom
 - This allows all the righteous to live there together for the full 1,000 years
 - Notice in v.3, Gabriel says that those who have insight will shine brightly
 - Having insight means to have the faith in Christ that God grants by His grace
 - Those who have that insight will likewise have God’s glory in their resurrected state
 - This reference to shining could be metaphor or it could be literal
 - If it’s literal, it means that the new bodies glow in a fashion similar to the way Jesus appeared to Daniel and John
 - Meanwhile, the resurrection for those not in the book will take place at the end of the Kingdom, according to Revelation 20
 - Their resurrection waits until then so that all unbelieving humanity, including those who come out of the Kingdom, can be judged together

- And it leads to all being sent to live forever in the Lake of Fire

Dan. 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.”

- Now we are getting close to that promised surprise ending, which connects the Book of Daniel to Revelation
 - After Gabriel tells Daniel about the resurrection of the Old Testament saints, he instructs Daniel to conceal these words
 - Specifically, Daniel is to seal up the book until the end of time
 - At first, we may think Daniel is sealing up the words we’re reading now, the prophecies of his book, or at least these chapters
 - But that doesn’t make sense, because we’re reading them now
 - The Book of Daniel was never sealed, as far as we know
 - He must be talking about another book about the end times
 - This other book must contain more details than we have revealed in Daniel alone
 - What might we find in this other book?
 - And why did the angel ask Daniel to write it and yet not allow anyone to see it?
 - Our answers come later in this chapter
- In v.4, the angel says that many will go back and forth
 - “The many” here continues to refer to Israel, and so it’s a summary of Israel’s future during the Age of the Gentiles
 - They will go “back and forth” in the sense of coming in and out of the land, in and out of persecution
 - Israel must endure its ups and downs over the centuries as God directs, in keeping with the Age of the Gentiles
 - But none of these ups and downs will fundamentally alter their situation during this age
 - They will remain under Gentile oppression

- And even if they gain a measure of security in their land, as they have today, it's fleeting, incomplete and ultimately, temporary
- Only the Messiah's return will correct the situation
- Furthermore, knowledge will increase
 - This likely refers to the increase of spiritual knowledge, resulting from more revelation from God
 - We know that more books of the Old Testament were written after Daniel's day
 - And the entire New Testament was yet to be written
 - To say nothing of the Messiah's arrival
- Nevertheless, this increase of spiritual knowledge will not – by itself – change Israel's plight
 - Certainly, the Messiah's arrival will rescue many from within Israel over the centuries
 - But the nation as a whole will still encounter ups and downs, despite this increase
- Then Daniel takes over the narrative from Gabriel to tell us what he sees

Dan. 12:5 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.

Dan. 12:6 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?"

Dan. 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.

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

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

- He sees the man in linen, who we know as Christ, above the waters of the Tigris river
 - And on either bank, two others standing

- We can presume these others include Gabriel, who has been speaking to Daniel
- And perhaps the other is the other great prince mentioned in this chapter, Michael
- Daniel then hears one of the angels asking how long until the end of these wonders?
 - What wonders is the angel talking about?
 - Is he talking about everything Gabriel described in Chapters 10-12?
 - Or some portion of it only? Or the things written in the sealed book?
- Christ's answer to the question gives us an important clue
 - Jesus swore by the One Who lives forever that these wonders will last a time, times and half of time
 - That phrase is another important link to the book of Revelation
 - In Revelation, that same phrase appears in Chapter 12
 - From the context of Revelation, it's understood to mean 3.5 years
- And then Jesus adds that at the conclusion of this time, the holy people (Israel) will be shattered and all the events will be completed
 - Jesus' words give us an anchor for the 3.5 years
 - At its end, the holy people will be shattered, that is, broken
 - And all the purposes in these events will have been met
 - If all the events of Tribulation have come to completion, then by definition, Tribulation must have come to an end
 - Furthermore, the Jewish people aren't broken, that is, brought to faith in Messiah, until the end of Tribulation
 - Therefore, the 3.5 years Jesus mentions must be the final three and a half years of the seven-year Tribulation
- So we know that Daniel was troubled by terrifying visions, and Gabriel came to give him additional insight

- Some of that insight was recorded for our benefit in Chapters 10-12
 - These things covered kings of Persia, kings of the Greek Empire
 - And it even looked ahead to the antichrist of Tribulation
- But then he was told to record wonders of the end times that must be sealed up and not be revealed by Daniel
 - Collectively, these things last 3.5 years, the final 3.5 years of Tribulation
 - The things Daniel wrote are in addition to the details he gave us in Chapters 10-11
- Daniel himself was confused about these wonders and why he must know them, but not write them
 - In v.8, he asked the Lord what will be the outcome of these events?
 - He means explain what the events mean, what's their purpose and how does the story end?
 - But the Lord tells Daniel to drop it, go your way, because the meaning of these things won't be revealed until the end time
 - Those who live in the end time will be allowed to know what these things mean
- In the meantime, Jesus gives Daniel a summary of life until that time
 - Speaking of the Jews, He says many will be purged and refined
 - The trials and persecutions Israel endures over the centuries of the Age of the Gentiles will produce a crop of many believing Jews
- Secondly, the wicked will continue to act wickedly and they will not understand the truth
 - Circumstances, and even persecution, do not by themselves produce faith
 - The unbelieving heart cannot know the truth until God reveals it to them

- But He will grant insight to some along the way, and this remnant of Israel will understand the Word of God and be saved
- So now this begs the question, what happened to Daniel's book?
 - If he sealed it and never shared it with the world, then how do those of the end times come to know what's in it?
- The answer is found in Revelation 10

Rev. 10:1 I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire;

Rev. 10:2 and he had in his hand a little book which was open. He placed his right foot on the sea and his left on the land;

Rev. 10:3 and he cried out with a loud voice, as when a lion roars; and when he had cried out, the seven peals of thunder uttered their voices.

Rev. 10:4 When the seven peals of thunder had spoken, I was about to write; and I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up the things which the seven peals of thunder have spoken and do not write them."

Rev. 10:5 Then the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted up his right hand to heaven,

Rev. 10:6 and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things in it, and the earth and the things in it, and the sea and the things in it, that there will be delay no longer,

Rev. 10:7 but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then the mystery of God is finished, as He preached to His servants the prophets.

Rev. 10:8 Then the voice which I heard from heaven, I heard again speaking with me, and saying, "Go, take the book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the land."

Rev. 10:9 So I went to the angel, telling him to give me the little book. And he said to me, "Take it and eat it; it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey."

Rev. 10:10 I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and in my mouth it was sweet as honey; and when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter.

Rev. 10:11 And they said to me, "You must prophesy again concerning many peoples and nations and tongues and kings."

- Do you see the similarities between this moment and the one we've been studying in Daniel?
 - John sees a strong angel descending from Heaven
 - This is the angel Michael arising, as promised in Daniel 12

- And as he returns, he carries with him a little book
- Why is it “little?”
- Probably because it’s a man-sized scroll, while the angel is much larger in appearance
- As this angel arrives, he swears upon Him Who lives forever that there be no delay any longer
 - Earlier, Jesus swore in a similar manner when giving the length of these wonders
 - But at that time, the word was given to seal up the writing because it described things yet to come and not to be revealed
- Now, the angel is saying the time has come for the 3.5 years to transpire
 - Furthermore, he directs John to take the book and eat it
 - Once he eats it, his mouth will find it sweet, but his stomach finds it bitter
 - This is a classic description of prophecy of Tribulation
 - We find prophecy attractive, in that it’s exciting to learn the future
 - But once we know what it says, we find the truth troubling and disturbing
 - This was to be John’s experience
- As you can probably tell, the book John received was the one Daniel wrote
 - Daniel was given a detailed explanation of the events of the final half of Tribulation, including the bowl judgments
 - But of course, Daniel didn’t understand them well and what he saw greatly disturbed him
 - When he asked for clarification, he received what we have in Daniel 10-12
 - But obviously, Gabriel’s explanation didn’t shed much light on what Daniel saw in his visions
 - But the Lord saw fit to give Daniel this preview so that he could write it for John

- Then John received it and was commissioned to write it for us
- So the events recorded in Revelation 11-19 are what Daniel wrote in the little book and sealed up
- John then received them and was permitted to give them to us
 - Even then, the understanding of Revelation has alluded believers for centuries since John wrote it
 - But in the past century or so, the Spirit has permitted the Church to come to a proper understanding
 - So, if we now have an understanding of things reserved for the end times, what does that tell you about your day?
- Moreover, why did the Lord bother with having Daniel write the little book?
 - The best answer is that this helped tie both books together and authentic John's writing
 - We can see that these two books are working closely together so that we can trust the prophecy in both
 - To accept Daniel is to accept Revelation
- Finally, the Book of Daniel ends with one last tantalizing prophecy about what follows the end of Tribulation

Dan. 12:11 "From the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days.

Dan. 12:12 "How blessed is he who keeps waiting and attains to the 1,335 days!

- The Lord gives Daniel another date range
 - He says begin counting from the midpoint of Tribulation, when the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up
 - This is the point when the antichrist breaks his covenant with Israel, in the midpoint of the "seven", as we read in Daniel 9
 - This begins the 3.5 years that Daniel recorded in his little book
 - Counting from that point, Jesus says there will be 1,290 days
 - The Jews count 360 days to a year

- So there are 1,260 days in 3.5 years
- Therefore, Jesus is asking us to count a period of time that last a full month after the antichrist dies and the Lord returns
- Why count 30 days longer? What are we counting toward?
- And even more confusing, Jesus goes on to say that those who attain or last until day 1,335 will be blessed
 - 1,335 days adds another 45 days to the 30 given earlier
 - So something important happens at day 30 following the end of Tribulation
 - And then something blessed happens 75 days after the end of Tribulation
- We call this period between after the Tribulation the “75-day Interval”
 - The first period of 30 days counts until the restoration of the temple, based on Jesus’ description in v.11
 - He specifically mentions the abomination of desolation in v.11
 - That suggests that the 30 days has something to do with correcting that abomination by cleansing the temple
 - Then, we have an additional 45 days before the Kingdom is ready to start
 - In that sense, a person is blessed to be able to reach the end of the 75 days
 - This statement suggests a choosing process takes place during the interval
 - Perhaps Jesus was describing this process in Matthew 25, when He described a separation of sheep and goats following His Second Coming?
 - Besides that process, there is likely to be a huge effort to repair the damage done during the judgments of Tribulation
 - Remember, the Kingdom takes place on the same earth that hosted mankind for the past 6,000 years

- And the if the world is to return to a paradise, there must be some time given to that cleanup effort
- Obviously, it will be accomplished supernaturally
- Whatever happens in that time, 45 days pass before the Kingdom begins
- Finally, Daniel is dismissed from prophetic service

Dan. 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.”

- Daniel is told to go his way
 - He will die and enter into his eternal rest
 - Then he will be resurrected, as will all saints (you will one day meet Daniel!)
 - And like all saints, he will receive a portion in the Kingdom as his reward
- Daniel was being assured that he would not experience the tribulations he foresaw, and we too share that promise
 - We don't see the Tribulation
 - We will enter rest and await these things to finish in due time
 - But be assured, they will all come to pass...and very soon