

Israel's Time of Trouble

Welcome to Harvest Community Church

Series: The Book of Daniel

Text: Daniel 12:1

Chapter twelve is a continuation of chapter eleven. There are several principles that we need to know as we study this chapter.

- The phrase “your people” in verse one refers to the nation of Israel after the Rapture of the church.
- These developments take place during a period called the Great Tribulation. This corresponds to the 70th week of Daniel that we studied in chapter 9.
- When Daniel received this dream, God told him that it would not happen for many days. 2,500 years have passed since then. When this will begin no one knows. While we know that these things will happen, it has been kept from our understanding so that no one could set the date. **Matthew 24:36**

The first three verses introduce us to Michael the Archangel. The term archangel occurs only twice in scripture. **1 Thess. 4:16, Jude 1:9** An archangel is simply an angel of high rank. The Bible does not tell us how many there are, but some have speculated that there may only be up to seven. Gabriel is often called an archangel but is never identified as one in scripture. Many believe that Lucifer was an archangel before his rebellion against God.

It is in Daniel that we come to understand that there is a hierarchy found in spiritual warfare. **Ephesians 6:12** Michael is the only one called an archangel in scripture and he is represented as having his own angels. **Revelation 12:7** We also know that a third of the angels chose to follow Lucifer and were cast out of heaven. The angel Michael is often associated with spiritual battle. Michael is Satan's true opposite. Satan is not the opposite of Jesus; he is the opposite of Michael. In addition to his role as a spiritual warrior, Michael has a special job in protecting Israel. God appointed Michael as a spiritual guardian or a prince over Israel. **Daniel 10:13, Daniel 10:21** He seems to have a responsibility of protecting and prospering Israel. It would also seem that there are certain “princes” that oversee principalities or areas different regions of the world. These could be for God or for Satan.

Daniel receives this vision in which he sees the nation of Israel in a time of profound trouble and they will need the help of angels. **Daniel 12:1** This refers to the time of persecution for Israel and world calamity known as the Great Tribulation. This period is also called the time of Jacob's trouble. **Jeremiah 30:7** This will be unlike anything that Israel has experienced in their history. The Jewish people have known many times of trouble through their history. From the horrors at the fall of Samaria and Jerusalem to the terrors brought by Antiochus Epiphanes, to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, to the persecutions from the church during the Dark Ages, to the Holocaust in the 20th century, it often seems that all Israel's history has been a time of trouble. Yet this time of trouble will be different. This will be a worse time of trouble than Israel has ever seen before. Jesus spoke of this time.

Matthew 24:15-26, Revelation 12:13-17

The end of verse one prophesies a special promise of deliverance.

“At that time your people shall be delivered” – Despite the terrors of that time, deliverance is assured. No matter how great the attack is against the Jewish people, God promises to preserve them. He will never break His promise to Abraham. **Genesis 17:7** This promise of deliverance is not for every last person of Jewish heritage, but for these who are found written in the book. Not every person of Jewish heritage will be saved, yet Israel, as a whole will be known as a people who trust in Jesus as their Messiah, and truly turn to the Lord. **Romans 11:25-27**

Daniel 12:2

Daniel is given a prophecy of two resurrections. Everyone will die at some point except those who belong to Christ who are raptured. The Bible clearly teaches two resurrections, one for the saved and one for those without Christ. **John 5:29, Revelation 20:4-6**

Some to everlasting life and some to everlasting shame and disgrace. The terror of hell never ends. There is not blissful annihilation after some period of punishment. This passage denies a rising doctrine within the church; a modified annihilationism that teaches that unjustified sinners are sent to Hell and they suffer torment for a while, but then their beings perish for eternity. The eternal nature of hell is just as vital to understand as the eternal peace and glory of Heaven.

Daniel 12:3

The angel then reminds Daniel of the eternal value of the Great Commission. Soul winners will have eternal rewards but will clearly be a beacon of light in the last days. The wise among God’s people are those who turn many to righteousness. All God’s people are like stars in the sense that they radiate light and help others to see and find their way. But certainly, those who turn many to righteousness shine even more brightly, helping even more people to see the light and find their way. This promise applies to all the wise, and all of those who turn many to righteousness through all ages. The brightness of God’s wise ones, and those who turn many to righteousness, will last forever. It isn’t fading. It endures, when so many other things that we put our effort into, even if they succeed, give only a temporary “shine.” It is worth it to invest our lives into the things that last forever and ever.

Daniel 12:4

To ‘shut up the words’ implied that the words should be kept safely until the time when they were needed. ‘Seal the book’ has the double sense of authenticating the message and preserving it. Daniel’s prophecy certainly was of some value in his own day. But there would come a day, the time of the end, when his prophecy would be of even more importance. It was important to shut up the words and seal the book until the time of the end.

As Daniel’s prophecies and visions reveal, they were clearly understood by those going through them at the time. For instance, when the High Priest was able to show Alexander the Great the prophecies of Daniel and he showed favor to Jerusalem. Even in our day we are understanding with greater clarity the things that we see unfolding that make prophecy possible that was not even available as soon as thirty years ago.

“Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall increase” – Daniel could never have imagined how the ability to travel has radically changed society. The ability of a daily **commute** has made the suburbs possible and people owning homes instead of being crowded into apartments. He could never have imagined the airplane, jets or high-speed rail. Information about everything is available at our fingertips.

Daniel 12:5-7

Daniel is back to the riverbank first mentioned in Daniel 10:4 and the visions of Daniel chapters 10-12 all took place as Daniel stood at this riverbank. The question is asked how **long** will all of this last. The response is 3 ½ years or the last half of the seven years of tribulation known as the Great Tribulation.

This 3 ½ year period is well known in other passages of Biblical prophecy:

Daniel 7:25 described it as the period that saints are given into antichrist’s hands.

Daniel 9:27 described it as the period between the breaking of antichrist’s covenant with Israel, the erection of the abomination of desolation, and the establishment of Jesus’ kingdom.

Daniel 12:7 described it as the duration of “the time of trouble” for Israel.

Revelation 11:2 described it as the period that the holy city will be tread underfoot by Gentiles.

Revelation 11:3 described it as the period of ministry for the two witnesses.

Revelation 12:6 and 12:14 described it as the period that Israel (perhaps only its remnant) is preserved by God in the wilderness.

Revelation 13:5 describe it as the duration of Antichrist’s authority to rule, persecute and blaspheme.

Taking all these together, we are obviously dealing with the last half of Daniel’s seventieth week (the Great Tribulation); and we know very **little** about the first half. The people of Israel will seem completely crushed as these things end, but at that time, the Messiah – upon whom they will trust before He returns – will return to rescue them. This will be at the end of the seven years and is known as the **second** coming of Christ.

Daniel 12:8 (NKJV & NLT)

This should bring us great comfort. Daniel was receiving first hand **revelation** knowledge and he didn’t understand it all. Daniel also wanted to know what the outcome of all of this would be. Righteous people **ask** God questions. Even in the intensity of being in the presence of angels. Even when receiving overwhelming prophetic news. Daniel still had questions. So will we. It is ok to ask.

Daniel 12:9-13

The angel told Daniel to go his way. He was telling Daniel to stop asking questions because there were things that would not be revealed until the end because they were not meant to be revealed until then.

“Many shall be purified, made white, and refined” – This is another prediction for what was future to Daniel, because this degree of purification is only possible after the **finished** work of Jesus on the cross.

“But the wicked shall do wickedly” – Most specifically, we would say that this prediction has to do with the end times, when wickedness will **abound** more than ever (as in the antichrist and his government), but an innumerable multitude will also be saved.

2 Timothy 3:13 (NKJV &)

“From the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days” – This was an amazing and **specific** prophecy. Daniel said that from the time of the abomination of desolation, you can simply start marking off your calendar to the final consummation of all things, 1,290 days later. While no one knows the day or hour of the Rapture of the church, we can **count** the days until the second coming of Christ. Israel will rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem and the Jewish people will begin to worship as they did in the Old Testament once again. This is why Jesus pointed to Daniel’s prophecy of the abomination of desolation as **the sign** that would mark the immediacy of His return. **Matthew 24:15**

“Blessed is he who waits and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days” – It is difficult to say what the relationship is between the three and one-half years mentioned in many places and the 1,335 days mentioned here. We could say that at the end of the 1,260 days Jesus returns. At the end of the 1,290 days, Jesus’ government is officially installed. At the end of the 1,335 days the nations are judged **Matthew 25:31-46**

“But you, go your way till the end” – Daniel’s mind was filled with exciting prophetic thoughts. It would have been easy for those things to become a **distraction** instead of a blessing to him. The angel gave him good instruction, go your way till the end. God had a course and a plan that He wanted Daniel to complete, and Daniel needed to remain focused on that. God has a plan for us in our day. While we are to be aware of the things that are unfolding prophetically, they are not to become the focus of our attention. **2 Peter 3:10-18**