

DEEPER

Daily Bible Study

Podcast, Study Notes, and Teacher Helps

From Dust to Stars

Sabbath (March 21): From Dust to Stars

Daniel 12:1-4 concludes the prophecy of Daniel chapter 10 and 11. As has been mentioned before, this prophecy focuses on revealing “the truth” (see Daniel 10:1,21; 11:2), and these final verses of the prophecy likewise focus on the end-time, “present truth” that God’s people must understand and experience in order to stand in Christ’s presence at the second coming. The promise of the second coming permeates this chapter: verse 2 references the resurrection, verse 10 contains a close parallel with the purification of the church found in Ephesians 5:25-27, and verse 13 holds a promise for Daniel—and all of God’s people—that they will be able to “stand” in Christ’s presence when He returns.

The first four verses of this chapter continue and complete the sequential fulfillment of Daniel’s final prophecy. Using the historicist interpretive framework, these verses begin with the close of probation, proceed through the time of trouble, highlight the special resurrection immediately preceding the second coming, and climax with the promise of God’s deliverance of His people at the second coming. This week, we will track this progression of end-time events in their literal, sequential fulfillment.

Daniel 12:1-4 also continues and completes the “spiritual application” of Daniel 11 that we studied in the previous lesson, with its emphasis on the message of righteousness by faith and the promise of victory over sin through Christ. Viewed from this perspective, we will see that these first four verses in Daniel 12 contain a powerful description of the revival and reformation that inspiration reveals will “re-awaken” God’s people at the very end of time. In today’s lesson, we will look at the broad contours of this heaven-sent revival as it is revealed in Daniel 12:1-4.

Discussion Questions:

- Read Daniel 12:4. What results when “many shall run to and fro”? (Knowledge shall be increased.) What might this “knowledge” be? (Answers will vary. Some have associated this knowledge with the general increase in scientific knowledge during the last couple of centuries. While this is not necessarily incorrect, a fascinating Biblical answer is found by comparing Habakkuk 2:2-4.)
- Read Habakkuk 2:2-4. What kind of knowledge is referred to in this passage? (Verse 4 talks of the “just that shall live by his faith.” This passage is focused on righteousness by faith, and its practical manifestation of experiencing God’s victory over sin. Compare Ephesians 4:11-15.) What do those who have this knowledge do? (They run.)
- Read Daniel 12:3. What do the wise do in this verse? (They turn many to righteousness.) How do they do this? (Answers will vary. They share the prophetic “vision” and promises that “the just shall live by faith.”)
- Read Daniel 12:2, Genesis 3:14, and Psalm 119:25. What can “dust” represent? (Sin.) What might Daniel 12:2 mean when “many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake”? (It appears that many people living in sin will become aware of their true condition

and respond to the everlasting gospel of righteousness by faith and victory over sin.) Will all of them respond favorably? (Apparently not. This verse reveals that some will accept the message and awake to everlasting life, while others will ultimately reject the message and receive “everlasting contempt.”)

- Read Daniel 12:1. What happens for those that “awake to everlasting life”? (They are found written in the book and are delivered.)

Sunday (March 22): Michael, Our Prince

In Daniel 12:1, Michael, “the great prince,” is pictured standing for God’s people. Earlier lessons have already identified Michael with the pre-incarnate Jesus Christ. Today’s lesson focuses on the significance of Jesus standing up at the very end of time. As the book *The Great Controversy* points out, the succession of events in Daniel 2,7,8 leads up to 1844 when the judgment starts:

The prophecies present a succession of events leading down to the opening of the judgment. This is especially true of the book of Daniel. But that part of his prophecy which related to the last days, Daniel was bidden to close up and seal “to the time of the end.” Not till we reach this time could a message concerning the judgment be proclaimed, based on the fulfillment of these prophecies. But at the time of the end, says the prophet, “many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.” Daniel 12:4. {GC 355.3}

Likewise, Daniel 12:1-4 reveals the succession of events when the judgment ends.

Discussion Questions:

- Read Daniel 11:45-12:1. What events immediately precede Michael standing up? (Selected events are listed below.)
 - The time of the end begins (Daniel 11:40)
 - The “little time of trouble” builds in intensity as worldwide conflict increases (Daniel 11:41-43)
 - The loud cry is given by God’s people (Daniel 11:44)
 - The king of the north attacks God’s people (Daniel 11:45)
- Read the passage below from the book *The Great Controversy* and list the events that take place when Michael stands up. (Suggested answers are underlined in the quoted text.)

“At that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book.” Daniel 12:1. {GC 613.1}

When the third angel’s message closes, mercy no longer pleads for the guilty inhabitants of the earth. The people of God have accomplished their work. They have received “the latter rain,” “the refreshing from the presence of the Lord,” and they are prepared for the trying hour before them. Angels are hastening to and fro in heaven. An angel returning from the earth announces that his work is done; the final test has been brought upon the world, and all who have proved themselves loyal to the divine precepts have received “the seal of the living God.” Then Jesus ceases His intercession in the sanctuary above. He lifts His hands and with a loud voice says, “It is done;” and all the angelic host lay off their crowns as He makes the solemn announcement: “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.” Revelation 22:11. Every case has been decided for life or death. Christ has made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. The number of His

subjects is made up: “the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven,” is about to be given to the heirs of salvation, and Jesus is to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. {GC 613.2}

When He leaves the sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth. In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor. The restraint which has been upon the wicked is removed, and Satan has entire control of the finally impenitent. God’s long-suffering has ended. The world has rejected His mercy, despised His love, and trampled upon His law. The wicked have passed the boundary of their probation; the Spirit of God, persistently resisted, has been at last withdrawn. Unsheltered by divine grace, they have no protection from the wicked one. Satan will then plunge the inhabitants of the earth into one great, final trouble. As the angels of God cease to hold in check the fierce winds of human passion, all the elements of strife will be let loose. The whole world will be involved in ruin more terrible than that which came upon Jerusalem of old. {GC 614.1}

Monday (March 23): Written in the Book

In Daniel 7:9-10, the prophet sees the heavenly judgment begin in heaven with books being opened. In Daniel 12:1, as the judgment is ending, it is revealed what those books contain—God’s people that are soon to be delivered. In today’s lesson we will discover what it means to be “written in the book.” More importantly, we will see *how* we can be written there.

Discussion Questions:

- Read Daniel 7:9,10. What is opened when the judgment begins? (Books are opened.)
- Read Daniel 12:1. What, or who, is written in the heavenly books? (Those that are delivered are “found written in the book.”) What book must this be? (It must be the book of life. As Jesus said in Luke 10:20, we should “rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.” There are other books in heaven in which all people are written [see Psalm 56:8; Malachi 3;16; Isaiah 65:6]; however, it is the book of life what we want to be in!)
- Read Daniel 7:13,14. These verses also describe what happens in heaven during the judgment. What does Christ receive when the books are opened and the judgment begins? (He receives “dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him.”) What, then, is Christ’s kingdom made up of, according to this verse? (It is made up of people that serve Him.)
- Read John 14:15. What is the key to serving God? (We must love Him in order to truly serve Him.)
- Read John 14:16,17. On what attitude and experience is the promise of the Holy Spirit given? (Jesus promised to give the Holy Spirit to those that love Him and desire to serve Him. It is interesting that in verse 17, Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as the “Spirit of truth.” Receiving the Spirit of Truth is essential to understanding and experiencing the promises of righteousness by faith contained in the “vision of truth” in Daniel 10-12 [see Daniel 10:1,21; 11:2].)

Tuesday (March 24): The Resurrection

In Daniel 12:2, the prophet is promised that when Michael stands and God’s people are delivered, “many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake.” As we will see, this refers to a

“special resurrection” that takes place shortly before the general resurrection of the righteous at the second coming.

Discussion Questions:

- Read Daniel 12:2 and John 5:28,29. What similarities are there between these two passages? (They both describe a resurrection of the righteous and the wicked.) What differences are there between these two passages? (In John 5, Jesus says that “all” people will be raised from the dead. This will happen at the general resurrection of the righteous at the second coming, and the general resurrection of the wicked after the millennium. In Daniel 12, “many” but not all are raised. Apparently this verse is referring to a “special resurrection” involving a specific group of people around the time of the second coming.)
- Read Matthew 26:62-64. What promise did Jesus make to His persecutors during His trial? (They would see Him in His glory at the second coming. He was here referring to the special resurrection found in Daniel 12:2. These unfortunate souls will die three times—at the first death, after the special resurrection at the second coming, and again at the second death following the millennium.)
- Read the following statement from the book *The Great Controversy*, and discuss why God raises up those who have died “in the faith of the third angel’s message” at the special resurrection:

Graves are opened, and “many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth ... awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” Daniel 12:2. All who have died in the faith of the third angel’s message come forth from the tomb glorified, to hear God’s covenant of peace with those who have kept His law. “They also which pierced Him” (Revelation 1:7), those that mocked and derided Christ’s dying agonies, and the most violent opposers of His truth and His people, are raised to behold Him in His glory and to see the honor placed upon the loyal and obedient. {GC 637.1}

Wednesday (March 25): The Sealed Book

In Daniel 12:4, an angel instructs Daniel to “seal the book” until “the time of the end.” This “book” refers most specifically to the vision of Daniel 10-12 and more generally to the prophecies found in Daniel 8:14 through the end of the book. Historical evidence is clear that Christians in the early centuries understood Daniel’s prophecies pointing to Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, and even the emergence of the antichrist power sometime after Rome would fall. However, it was not until “the time of the end”—in the late 1700s and early 1800s—that the prophecies in the latter portion of the book of Daniel began to be understood.

Discussion Questions:

- Read Daniel 12:4. Why does God instruct Daniel to seal the book? Is God trying to hide something from him? (The instruction to seal the book is a prophecy that the things in the book will not be understood until the time of the end.)
- Read Daniel 12:9,10. What does verse 10 reveal about those who eventually understand Daniel’s sealed book, and those that do not? What is the difference between them? (The wise eventually understand, but the wicked do not.) Who are the wise, according to this verse? (The wise are those that are “purified, and made white, and tried.” In other words, an experience is necessary to understand the things written in the sealed book.) What is the

experience necessary to understand the book? (According to verse 10, only those who allow God to refine their characters and receive His righteousness are wise and understand.)

- Read Revelation 10:1,2. What does the heavenly being in this prophetic passage hold in his hand? (An open book.) What does that imply about the contents of the book? (It implies that the contents of the book are understood.)
- Read Revelation 10:3,4. How can this little book be “open” when John is told to “seal up” the things it contains? (Like Daniel’s book, this “little book” is to be sealed up until God’s people have gone through a certain experience. After that experience, or perhaps through that experience, they will gain an understanding of the things in the book.)
- Read Revelation 10:7 and Colossians 1:27. What is the key to understanding the things in this “little book”? (The book centers on the finishing of the mystery of God, which, according to Colossians 1:27, is “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” It points to an experience whereby God purifies His people so that He can live within them.)
- Read Revelation 10:8-11 and the passage below from the *SDA Bible Commentary*. Discuss how Revelation 10:8-11 points to the experience of God’s people during the Advent Awakening and through the Great Disappointment.

After these seven thunders uttered their voices, the injunction comes to John as to Daniel in regard to the little book: “Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered.” These relate to future events which will be disclosed in their order. Daniel shall stand in his lot at the end of the days. John sees the little book unsealed. Then Daniel’s prophecies have their proper place in the first, second, and third angels’ messages to be given to the world. The unsealing of the little book was the message in relation to time. {7BC 971.4}

The books of Daniel and the Revelation are one. One is a prophecy, the other a revelation; one a book sealed, the other a book opened. John heard the mysteries which the thunders uttered, but he was commanded not to write them. {7BC 971.5}

The special light given to John which was expressed in the seven thunders was a delineation of events which would transpire under the first and second angels’ messages. It was not best for the people to know these things, for their faith must necessarily be tested. In the order of God most wonderful and advanced truths would be proclaimed. The first and second angels’ messages were to be proclaimed, but no further light was to be revealed before these messages had done their specific work. This is represented by the angel standing with one foot on the sea, proclaiming with a most solemn oath that time should be no longer. {7BC 971.6}

This time, which the angel declares with a solemn oath, is not the end of this world’s history, neither of probationary time, but of prophetic time, which should precede the advent of our Lord. That is, the people will not have another message upon definite time. After this period of time, reaching from 1842 to 1844, there can be no definite tracing of the prophetic time. The longest reckoning reaches to the autumn of 1844. {7BC 971.7}

Thursday (March 26): The Waiting Time

The book of Daniel contains numerous time prophecies, and chapter 12 is no exception. Three time prophecies are contained in its closing verses. One—the “time, times, and a half” (verse 7)—appears earlier in Daniel 7:25. The other two—the 1,290 days and the 1,335 days—appear only in Daniel 12:11-12. In today’s lesson we will take a closer look at these three time prophecies.

Discussion Questions:

- Read Daniel 12:6,7. Have we seen this time prophecy earlier in the book of Daniel? Where? (Yes. It is the same time prophecy found in Daniel 7:25.) What power and time period does it refer to? (It points to the 1,260 years of papal rule from 538 AD to 1798 AD.) Why might it be repeated here in Daniel 12 between two verses—verses 3 and 10—that point to the experience of God’s people as they are purified from sin and receive Christ’s righteousness? (Answers will vary. The destructive doctrines and activities of the little horn power during its 1,260 years of rule prevented, to a large degree, the ability of people to understand and experience God’s promises found in verses 3 and 10.)
- Read Daniel 12:10,11. What does this time prophecy point to? (It probably ends in 1798, like the 1,260-year prophecy. It would therefore begin in the year 508 AD, when King Clovis of France was baptized as a Roman Catholic, clearing the way for papal power to gain a strong foothold in Europe.
- Read Daniel 12:12,13. What does this time prophecy point to? (It points to a period of 1,335 years that end with a blessing for God’s people. It most likely begins in 508 AD and ends in 1843 AD, when the first angel’s message was being preached and the 2,300 years of Daniel 8:14 were coming to a close. In the year 1843 the advent believers were also beginning to pass through the experience prophesied in Revelation 10:8-11.)

Friday (March 27): Daniel 12 and the 10 Virgins

At the beginning of this week’s lessons, we saw that Daniel 12:1-4 reveal a powerful revival and reformation that will awaken God’s people at the end of time and prepare them to stand in Christ’s presence at the second coming. In today’s lesson, we will see how Christ’s parable of the 10 virgins provides some striking parallels with this passage.

Discussion Questions:

- Read Matthew 25:1-4. What two groups of “virgins” are in this parable? (The wise and the foolish.) What makes the difference between these two groups? (The wise took oil with their lamps, while the foolish did not.)
- Read Daniel 12:3,10. What do these verses reveal about what it means to have “oil” in our lamps? (While the oil can represent the Holy Spirit, these verses reveal the practical results of the Holy Spirit’s work in a person’s life—they will turn others to righteousness and be purified and white themselves.)
- Read Matthew 25:5. What happens to both the wise and foolish virgins? (They all fall asleep.) What happens when the bridegroom approaches? (They all wake up.)
- Read Daniel 12:2. As we have already studied, this verse will receive a literal fulfillment in the special resurrection. However, when applied spiritually and personally, it may also point to the experience of God’s professed people when the message of righteousness by faith comes to them. According to this verse, how many will respond to this message? (Many respond to it.) Do they all respond the same way? (No. Some apparently accept it and are saved, while others reject it and are lost.)
- Read Matthew 25:6-12. What privilege do the wise virgins experience? (They enter into the marriage ceremony with the bridegroom.) What happens to the foolish virgins? (They “run to and fro” looking for oil at the wrong time. Notice also the similarities between verse 9 and Revelation 13:17. Perhaps the foolish virgins are trying to “buy and sell” Christ’s

righteousness too late—at the time of final crisis—and end up receiving a counterfeit—the mark of the beast—instead.)

- Read Matthew 25:10. What does it mean to be “ready”? (Answers will vary. In the context of today’s study, it certainly includes a daily experience now, before the final crisis strikes, of seeking Christ’s righteousness and power over sin in our lives.)