

Daniel

From Dust to Stars

Lesson #13 for March 28, 2020

Scriptures: Daniel 12; Romans 8:18,34; Luke 10:20; Hebrews 2:14-15; John 14:29; Revelation 11:3.

1. The book of Daniel has what might be thought of as “bookends.” It begins with Nebuchadnezzar from Babylon, entering the land of Judea and taking captives. It ends with Michael, standing up to deliver God’s people from end-time Babylon.
2. Throughout the book of Daniel, we find Daniel and his friends remained faithful to their God through life-threatening situations. That will also be true of those who stand up at the end of time when there will be “a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation.” (Daniel 12:1, *KJV**) Daniel 12 goes on to tell us that those who are wise will lead others to righteousness. (Daniel 12:3)

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.”—*New American Standard Bible: 1995 update.** (1995). (Daniel 12:1). La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

3. One of the major challenges in this lesson is determining exactly who Michael is. From previous lessons we have noted that the name *Michael* means, “Who is like God?” or “The One who is like God.” But, as we will see, there are a number of passages in Scripture which help to identify Michael the Archangel as Jesus Christ Himself.
4. As we stated in earlier lessons, Daniel 10-12 is one continuous vision. In order to understand Daniel 12, our study for today, we need to look back at Daniel 11:40. Notice that it says, “At the time of the end.” (*NKJV**) This tells us clearly that the events of Daniel 12 are not back in the days of Daniel but actually will take place some time in the future, “at the time of the end.” Are we in “the time of the end” now?
5. What does it mean to say that Michael will stand up? Elsewhere in Scripture we read that kings who are ready to conquer or to rule “stand up.” In this case, Michael acts as a military Leader to stand up on behalf of His people.
6. We know from the legal system that when someone stands in your place in a judgment setting, that person speaks on your behalf. Michael speaks on our behalf in that judgment. But, that is no ordinary judgment. We are being constantly accused by Satan. (Zechariah 3:1-5; Revelation 12:10-12) In order for us to get a fair hearing before the court of the universe, (Daniel 7:9-14) Michael must stand up on our behalf and speak the truth before the onlooking universe.
7. It is scary to think that what is coming at the end of time will be the most severe plagues or troubles that the world has ever seen. Unfortunately, after reading Revelation 15:1, many believe that it is God who pours out those plagues on the earth. However, Ellen White states clearly:

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.**

A single angel destroyed all the first-born of the Egyptians and filled the land with mourning. When David offended against God by numbering the people, one angel caused that terrible destruction by which his sin was punished. **The same destructive power exercised by holy angels when God commands, will be exercised by evil angels when He permits. There are forces now ready, and only waiting the divine permission, to spread desolation everywhere.**—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy** 614.1-2.†

8. Those final plagues are described in Revelation 16; there is some additional information in Revelation 18:20-24. The one who is responsible for the plagues should be clear from reading Revelation 16:12-14. **Satan is responsible for the final plagues.** Satan hates God's people.
9. During those final days in this world's history after the close of probation, nothing would be gained by the death of any of God's faithful people. So, He will protect them through the seven last plagues. But, that does not mean that no one will be killed before probation closes.
10. In Daniel 7:9-10, we read about books being opened in heaven. What are those books? What do they contain? There are two specific types of books mentioned in Scripture: (1) There is one set of books which contains the names of those who belong to the Lord, sometimes designated as the "book of life" where their names were written before the foundation of this earth. (Exodus 32:32; Luke 10:20; Psalm 69:28; Philippians 4:30; Revelation 17:8) (2) God also has a complete and unerringly accurate record of everything that has ever happened on this earth. (Psalm 56:8; Malachi 3:16; Isaiah 65:6)
11. We believe that the sins of the righteous will be dealt with in the judgment. However:

That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven. The significance of the death of Christ will be seen by saints and angels.... The angels ascribe honor and glory to Christ, for even they are not secure except by looking to the sufferings of the Son of God. **It is through the efficacy of the cross that the angels of heaven are guarded from apostasy. Without the cross they would be no more secure against evil than were the angels before the fall of Satan. Angelic perfection failed in heaven.** Human perfection failed in Eden, the paradise of bliss. All who wish for security in earth or heaven must look to the Lamb of God. **The plan of salvation, making manifest the justice and love of God, provides an eternal safeguard against defection in unfallen worlds, as well as among those who shall be redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.... But repentance for sin alone cannot work the salvation of any soul. Man cannot be saved by his own works. Without Christ it is impossible for him to render perfect obedience to the law of God; and heaven can never be gained by an imperfect obedience; for this would place all heaven in jeopardy, and make possible a second rebellion.**—Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*,* December 30, 1889, par. 4.† Compare 5SDABC 1132.8-9; OHC 45.4; TA 205.3.
12. If the plan of salvation will provide "an eternal safeguard against defection in heaven," will it be possible to study the plan of salvation without having access to the records about sin? The

Bible contains a faithful record of the sins of almost every “saint” who lived of old. Will all Bibles have to be burned in order for all of their “bad deeds” to be “erased”?

13. What is and will be really happening in this judgment? Is it a matter of “bookkeeping”? Or, is there a real change that takes place in human beings? Would it be correct to say that only those who have been transformed by their relationship to/with Jesus Christ will be saved? Would that include the thief on the cross?

Daniel 12:2-3: ² “Many of those who have already died will live again: some will enjoy eternal life, and some will suffer eternal disgrace. ³The wise leaders will shine with all the brightness of the sky. And those who have taught many people to do what is right will shine like the stars for ever.”—American Bible Society. (1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation** (2nd ed., Daniel 12:2-3). New York: American Bible Society.

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.”—*New American Standard Bible: 1995 update.**

14. In these verses we read the most explicit reference in the Old Testament regarding resurrection. From this reference we should learn at least two things: (1) The idea that the dead are sleeping indicates that there is no immortal soul that is floating around on a cloud somewhere. (2) Genesis 2:7 makes it clear that the body plus the breath or spirit makes the soul. Thus, we believe that the dead are unconscious and will remain so until the resurrection.

15. Do God’s people have any reason to fear death?

16. **Romans 8:18:** I consider that what we suffer at this present time cannot be compared at all with the glory that is going to be revealed to us.—*Good News Bible.**

17. **Hebrews 2:14-15:** ¹⁴ Since the children, as he calls them, are people of flesh and blood, Jesus himself became like them and shared their human nature. He did this so that through his death he might destroy the Devil, who has the power over death, ¹⁵and in this way set free those who were slaves all their lives because of their fear of death.—*Good News Bible.** [How does that work?][†]

18. It is natural for us living here on this earth to think that things come to an end when we die. But, that is not God’s plan for us. Daniel promises us—and this is repeated many times in the New Testament—that those who die in Christ will rise to eternal life. Does that give you hope? Despite the vicissitudes and problems here on this earth, we can look forward to a guaranteed future in a perfect environment. However, this does not mean that we can go on in our Laodicean ways! God is calling us to stand up and act.

Daniel 12:4: He said to me, “And now, Daniel, close the book and put a seal on it until the end of the world. Meanwhile, many people will waste their efforts trying to understand what is happening.”—*Good News Bible.**

Daniel 12:4: “But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”—*The New King James Version.** (1982). (Daniel 12:4). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Amos 8:12: “People will wander from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean and then on from the north to the east. **They will look everywhere for a message from the LORD, but they will not find it.**”—*Good News Bible.**[†]

John 14:29: [Jesus said:] “I have told you this now before it all happens, so that when it does happen, you will believe.”—*Good News Bible.**^{††}

19. It seems strange to us that prophecies that God revealed to Daniel should be sealed up. (Daniel 12:4) What was the point of doing that? From the above verses, we understand that God chose to make this revelation to Daniel—whether or not he fully understood it—so that those of us living at the end of this world’s history can look back and see that God knew in advance what was going to happen. There are many aspects to these final events, many of which are touched on in the book of Daniel and also in the book of Revelation.
20. The next big question which we should ask is: What did God mean when he said to Daniel, “The time of the end”?

The apostle Paul warned the church not to look for the coming of Christ in his day. “That day shall not come,” he says, “except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed.” 2 Thessalonians 2:3. Not till after the great apostasy, and the long period of the reign of the “man of sin,” can we look for the advent of our Lord. The “man of sin,” which is also styled “the mystery of iniquity,” “the son of perdition,” and “that wicked,” represents the papacy, which, as foretold in prophecy, was to maintain its supremacy for 1260 years. This period ended in 1798. The coming of Christ could not take place before that time. Paul covers with his caution the whole of the Christian dispensation down to the year 1798. It is this side of that time that the message of Christ’s second coming is to be proclaimed.

No such message has ever been given in past ages. Paul, as we have seen, did not preach it; he pointed his brethren into the then far-distant future for the coming of the Lord. The Reformers did not proclaim it. Martin Luther placed the judgment about three hundred years in the future from his day. **But since 1798 the book of Daniel has been unsealed, knowledge of the prophecies has increased, and many have proclaimed the solemn message of the judgment near.**—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy** 356.1-2.†

21. When the Lisbon earthquake killed thousands of people in 1755 and 25 years later there was “The Dark Day” and the “moon turned to blood” in northern New England, people began to look at the prophecies in the Bible and say: “Maybe we are approaching the end of this world’s history!” There was a great religious awakening.

At the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century a new interest in the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation was awakened in widely separated places of earth. The study of these prophecies led to a widespread belief that the second advent of Christ was near. Numerous expositors in England, Joseph Wolff in the Middle East, Manuel Lacunza in South America, and William Miller in the United States, together with a host of other students of the prophecies, declared, on the basis of their study of the prophecies of Daniel, that the second advent was at hand. Today, this conviction has become the driving force of a worldwide movement.—Article on Daniel 12:4. In F. D. Nichol (Ed.), *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*,* vol. 4 (page 879). Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association (1955).

22. That great spiritual awakening led up to the Great Disappointment in 1844 and, ultimately, to the founding of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Shortly after 1844, the ministry of Ellen White began. Now we have numerous versions of the Bible as well as Ellen White’s writings available to us in electronic formats which are easily retrievable and searchable. As a result, no generation of people in history has had the amount of inspired material readily available to them that we have. We should be the most educated people of all time in regards to the truths of the Bible and the events of “the time of the end.” Are we?

23. Read Daniel 12:5-13. In these verses we have three prophecies. The first is the 1,260 day-year time period referred to in a number of places in Scripture, including Daniel 7:25; Revelation 11:3; 12:6,14; and 13:5. The other prophecies are the 1,290 day-year and the 1,335 day-year time periods. We will first deal with the 1,260 day-year time period.

24. As we already know, that period of papal supremacy extended from A.D. 538 to 1798. During that time, Roman suppression and murder of faithful Bible-believing Christians was severe.

Daniel 7:25: “He will speak against the Supreme God and oppress God’s people. He will try to change their religious laws and festivals, and God’s people will be under his power for three and a half years.”—*Good News Bible*.*

Revelation 11:3: ³ “I will send my two witnesses dressed in sackcloth, and they will proclaim God’s message during those 1,260 days.”—*Good News Bible*.*

Revelation 12:6,14: ⁶The woman fled to the desert, to a place God had prepared for her, where she will be taken care of for 1,260 days.... ¹⁴She was given the two wings of a large eagle in order to fly to her place in the desert, where she will be taken care of for three and a half years, safe from the dragon’s attack.—*Good News Bible*.*

Revelation 13:5: The beast was allowed to make proud claims which were insulting to God, and it was permitted to have authority for forty-two months.—*Good News Bible*.*

25. But, there are two other time periods about which we have very little information. One extends for 1,290 days-years and the other for 1,335 days-years.

The other two time periods, 1,290 and 1,335 days, answer a question—“what shall be the end of these things?” (*NKJV*)—posed by Daniel himself to the Man clothed in linen. And both begin with the removal of the “daily” and the setting up of the “abomination of desolation.” From the lesson on Daniel 8, we learned that **the “daily” refers to the continual intercession of Christ**, which was replaced with a counterfeit worship system. Thus, this prophetic period should start in A.D. 508, when Clovis, king of the Franks, converted to the Catholic faith. This important event paved the way for the union between church and state, which held sway throughout the Middle Ages. Hence, 1,290 days ended in 1798, when the pope was arrested by the French emperor Napoleon. And the 1,335 days, the last prophetic period mentioned in Daniel, ended in 1843. This was the time of the Millerite movement and renewed study of the biblical prophecies. It was a time of waiting and hope in the imminent coming of Jesus.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Thursday, March 26.^{†§}

26. What have we seen through these final stages of the prophecies of Daniel? God’s people have been persecuted repeatedly. Many have been martyred; but, ultimately, God’s faithful people will be vindicated and will live forever with Him in heaven.

27. Is there any reason why we should look for further time prophecies to be fulfilled? Is there any evidence in Scripture that there are further time prophecies still to come to an end?

28. Read John 14:29 again. The prophecies that we already have from Daniel and Revelation need to be read and reread until we understand them. **Then, when these events take place, we will realize that God knew in advance what was coming.**

29. What evidence do we have that *Michael* is Christ? This is a point about which very few of our fellow Christians agree with us. Do we have adequate scriptural support for our belief? *Michael* and/or *Michael the Archangel* is mentioned several times in Scripture. We have already looked

at Daniel 12:1. If we were to go back to the earliest known history, the history in heaven, we read in Revelation 12:7-9 that Michael and His heavenly army had to expel the Devil, or Satan, along with his associates before this world was created. Then, we read in Jude 9 that Michael contended with Satan over the body of Moses. But, there is even more convincing evidence in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 in which we are told that the righteous dead will arise at the voice of the Archangel; and we compare that with John 5:27-29 in which it says that they will arise at the voice of the Son of Man whom we know as Jesus Christ.

30. Daniel 12:2; Matthew 26:63-64; and Revelation 1:7 along with Revelation 14:13 imply that there is a resurrection that will occur at the end when both righteous and wicked will arise together.

A special resurrection precedes Christ's second advent. **"All who have died in the faith of the third angel's message" will arise at that time.** In addition, those who beheld with mockery Christ's crucifixion, and those who have most violently opposed the people of God, will be brought forth from their graves to see the fulfillment of the divine promise and the triumph of truth (see GC 637; Rev. 1:7).—Article on Daniel 12:2. In F. D. Nichol (Ed.), *SDABC*,* vol. 4, 878.†

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.—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy** 637.1.†

31. The special resurrection mentioned in these verses is not that general resurrection of the righteous which takes place at the second coming or the resurrection of the wicked that will take place at the third coming. This is a special resurrection including several select groups of people who need to see that marvelous event called the second coming. Daniel was promised that he would be among that group who will arise in that special resurrection.
32. One can get all tangled up trying to understand the details of the prophecies in Daniel.

"A group of college students was frustrated with their struggle to understand the book of Daniel. So, they went to the gym to play basketball. After their game they noticed that the old caretaker was sitting in the corner reading. 'What are you reading, Joe?' they asked. 'The book of Daniel,' he replied. 'Oh, you can't understand that.' 'Yes, I can,' Joe replied. 'It's quite simple. God wins.'"
—Adapted from Bob Fyall, *Daniel: A Tale of Two Cities* (Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 1998), p. 151.—[as quoted in *Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 174].

33. What are your own spiritual aspirations? Do you hope to live through the great time of trouble and the seven last plagues and see Jesus coming in the clouds without tasting death? Or, are you perhaps hoping that you will sleep through all those troubles? We have the promises noted above that even if you are among those who fall asleep, you will arise to see that second coming. What a glorious possibility!

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