

I. Daniel's Final Vision – Part 3 (Daniel 12:1-13)

A. Introduction

- This chapter contains the last portion of the last vision given to Daniel and shows what will take place in Israel after the great conflict (cf. Dan 10:1) concludes.
- This vision is one that spans the ages, from the time of Daniel all the way through to the arrival of Antichrist in the Tribulation, the Second Coming of Christ, and the establishment of His earthly kingdom.
- Although Antichrist will bring great destruction and devastation upon the Jewish people (cf. Dan 11:36-45), there is hope for them as this chapter reveals.
- Chapter 12 provides a glimpse into a future time when Israel will be rescued, when they will experience a turning back to God and the blessings that come with that.
- This section emphasizes the triumph for God's people after their unprecedented time of tribulation.
- Had Daniel ended on a note of suffering and oppression, it would be pretty discouraging for the Jewish people.
- But it doesn't; it ends with a ray of hope, the very hope that would have encouraged them in the midst of their exile.
- They will experience great oppression and persecution as a result of their sin, disobedience, and unbelief.
- This suffering comes at the hand of the Lord as He disciplines them during the time of the Gentiles.
- God's goal in this oppression is to purge and purify them (cf. Dan 11:35) and to bring them back to Himself when He restores them as a nation.
- There is an unfortunate chapter break between chapters 11 and 12.
- The same angel that spoke to Daniel in chapter 10 continues to speak in chapter 12.

B. Expositional Notes

1. The Restoration of Israel (vs. 1-3)

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.

- “at that time” refers to the events predicted in Daniel 11:36-45; thus, the events of this chapter follow immediately after the events described in 11:36-45.
- The events of chapter 12 immediately follow the oppression of the Antichrist in the Great Tribulation.
- During that future time, Antichrist will seek to destroy and annihilate the Jewish people as part of his effort to prevent the return and reign of Christ.

- It will be an incredibly dark time for Israel, further described in verse 1 as “a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time.”
 - This will be a horrible time on earth and a time of unprecedented distress for Israel, described in both the OT (Deut 4:30; Jer 30:7; Joel 2:2) and the NT (Matt 24:21; Rev 6:12-17).
 - The devastation will be unparalleled in human history, a horrific time of persecution for Israel.
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- Revelation 6-18 describe this time of great catastrophe on the earth.
 - The seal judgments (Rev 6-7) are the “beginning of birth pangs” (Matt 24:8).
 - 1st - Revival of conquering political leader (Antichrist)
 - 2nd - Open war and revolution
 - 3rd - Worldwide Famine
 - 4th - War, famine, disease, beasts
 - 5th - Martyrs killed
 - 6th - Disturbance in earth and heaven
 - Those are the “minor” events of the first half of the Tribulation
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- Near the midpoint of the Tribulation, Antichrist dies violently and suddenly from a fatal wound, but then comes back to life (Rev 13:3, 12, 14).
 - Israel’s treaty with the Antichrist is broken as he commits the “abomination of desolation” (Dan 9:27; Matt 24:15; Rev 13:14-15).
 - Satan is cast out of heaven and thrown to the earth (Rev 12:9). Although Satan and his demons were cast out of heaven at the time of their original rebellion, they still have access to it. However, that access will be denied during the Tribulation and they will be forever barred from heaven.
 - Satan will unleash his persecution of Israel through Antichrist and they will be oppressed in a way never experienced previously (Rev 12:13, 17).
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- Near the midpoint of the Tribulation, the opening of the 7th seal begins the trumpet judgments (Rev 8-9, 11):
 - 1st - One-third of the earth’s vegetation is burned up
 - 2nd - One-third of the seas and all contained therein is destroyed
 - 3rd - One-third of earth’s water is contaminated
 - 4th - One-third of the sun, moon, and stars are darkened
 - 5th - Five months of torment by locusts with the bite of scorpions
 - 6th - An army of 200 million destroys one-third of mankind
 - The sounding of the 7th trumpet begins the bowl judgments (Rev 16):
 - 1st - Sores on followers of the beast
 - 2nd - Seas turned to blood
 - 3rd - Fresh water turned to blood

- 4th - Scorching heat of sun torments mankind
 - 5th - Darkness
 - 6th - Euphrates dried up in preparation for Armageddon
 - 7th - Physical catastrophes
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- This suffering is specifically designed to prepare Israel for accepting the One they have so long rejected.
 - The Tribulation has a definite Jewish character since God must break the stubborn will of Israel to make them ready to receive their Messiah.
 - Through the horrible suffering of the Tribulation, God will remove the spiritual blinders from the nation of Israel and they will become a believing nation (Jer 31:31-34; Zech 12:10; 13:8-9).
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- Despite this terrible time of distress, Israel will be aided by Michael, “the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people.”
 - “your people” is a reference to the Jewish people.
 - Michael is Israel’s defender, the one who will specially protect Israel during the Tribulation and will rise to their defense.
 - Revelation 12 possibly describes how Michael will protect them:
 - Verses 7-13 describe the oppression of Israel by Satan
 - Verses 14-16 describe God’s supernatural protection of His people, a protection possibly orchestrated by Michael as the defender of Israel
 - “two wings of the great eagle” (vs. 14) – not actual birds’ wings, but a description of God’s providential care for Israel
 - “wilderness” (vs. 6, 14) – possibly a reference to Petra, the fortress capital of the Nabateans in Edom which has a narrow access which could easily be blocked but which opens up into a large canyon capable of caring for many thousands of people; also possibly a reference to Edom, Moab, and Ammon, nations which will be spared from Antichrist’s attack (Dan 11:41)
 - “earth opened its mouth” (vs. 16) – some sort of supernatural occurrence (earthquake?) whereby the armies attacking Israel will be swallowed up
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- Despite the oppression, persecution, and efforts by Satan to exterminate the Jewish people, they “will be rescued” from the hatred of the Antichrist.
 - The Lord Jesus Christ will appear and rescue the faithful in Israel.
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- Specifically, it is those who are “found written in the book,” namely the book of life (Luke 10:20; Rev 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27), who will be rescued.
 - “All (Jews and Gentiles) who have trusted Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord have their names written in the book of life. Goldingay designates this as ‘the citizen list of the true Jerusalem.’”²²³

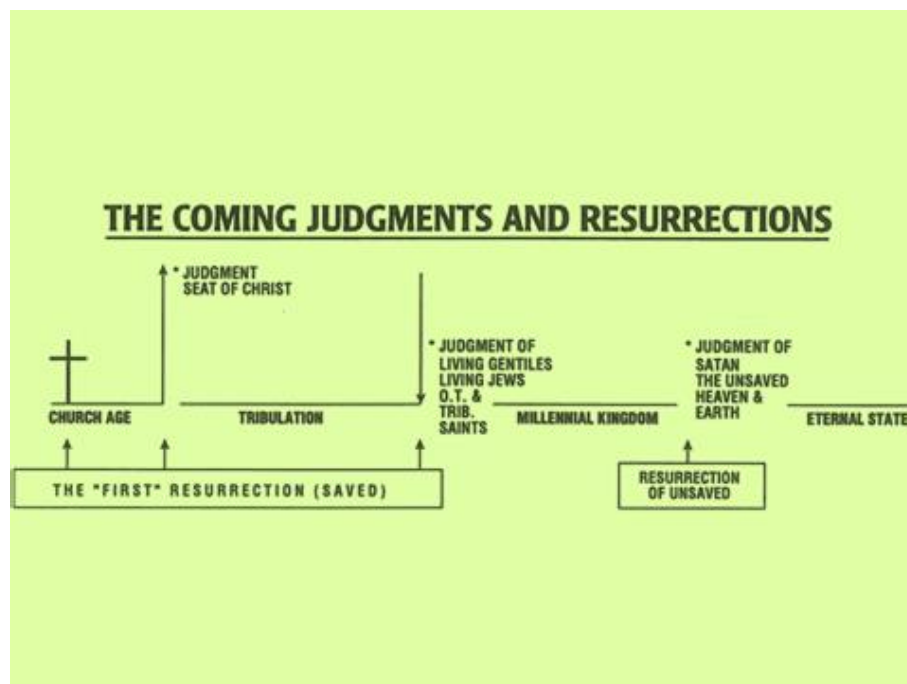
²²³ Miller 1994: 316.

- That likely means that not every Jew alive on the earth is going to be saved at that time but only the elect, only the remnant who will look to Christ in repentance at His return.
- Zechariah 13:8-9 indicates that two-thirds of the Jewish people will die in the Tribulation.
- The remaining one-third of Jewish people still alive at the end of the Tribulation will likely constitute the redeemed nation of Israel, the sheep at the sheep-goat judgment after the Second Coming of Christ who enter the Millennial kingdom alive (Matt 25:31-46).
- This remnant of believing Jews will come to Christ on the basis of the testimony of the two witnesses and the testimony of the 144,000 Jews who are sealed.
- It is these who will be saved individually in the Tribulation and will constitute the remnant that makes up the redeemed and restored nation of Israel.

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.

- Not only are God's people promised the hope of a future rescue, they are also promised the hope of a future resurrection.
- The climax of the Tribulation is the resurrection, the great hope of all OT saints (Heb 11:19; Job 19:25-27; Is 26:19).
- "those who sleep in the dust of the ground" is a metaphor for death (cf. 1 Thess 4:13-15).
- It is not a reference to soul sleep or some unconscious existence in death; rather, it means that a dead person's body appears to be asleep but their soul is very much alive (in heaven for believers – 2 Cor 5:8; Phil 1:21-23).
- The angel promised Daniel that all Tribulation saints who die at the hand of the Antichrist will be resurrected.
- This is important because the question at this point might be: Are the Jews who die during the Tribulation omitted from the benefits that come when Christ comes to set up his earthly millennial kingdom?
- The answer is clear: "No, they won't miss out at all; in fact, they will be raised again and made to share in all the blessings of those who are still alive."
- They will awaken to life with resurrected bodies.
- Daniel's own resurrection is foretold in verse 13.
- Daniel is told about two kinds of resurrection here: "these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt."
- There will be a bodily resurrection of some to everlasting life and a bodily resurrection of others to judgment.
- The Bible teaches a resurrection of the righteous and a resurrection of the wicked, a first resurrection and a second resurrection (cf. John 5:28-29).

- These two resurrections are not resurrections in “order” but resurrections in “kind.”
- The first resurrection is a “kind” of resurrection, namely the resurrection of the righteous who will receive bodies fit perfectly for eternity in heaven: OT saints, NT saints, Tribulation saints (although, specifically here in Daniel 12:2, the “these to everlasting life” refers to Israel – both OT and Tribulation saints).
- The resurrection described here does not include church age saints who were taken out of the world at the Rapture before the Tribulation period, the dead by resurrection and the living by translation.
- Thus, there are multiple installments of the “first resurrection:” Christ (Matt 28:6-7), those who came out of the tombs at Christ’s death (Matt 27:52), church saints in the Rapture (1 Thess 4:16-17), and OT/Tribulations saints (Dan 12:2).
- The second resurrection of “others to disgrace and everlasting contempt” (Dan 12:2) refers to the unconverted of all time occurs at the end of the Millennium.
- The second resurrection is a “kind” of resurrection, namely the resurrection of the unrighteous who will receive bodies fit perfectly for enduring the torments of hell for eternity.



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- Amillennialists hold that this verse teaches that there will be a general resurrection of all the dead, the righteous and the wicked, at the Second Coming of Christ, just before the eternal state ensues.

²²⁴ Chart taken from Benware, *Understanding End Times Prophecy*.

- Others (historic premillennialists) hold that it relates to a resurrection of the righteous just before the Second Advent (post-tribulational) and the wicked after the millennial phase of Christ's eternal rule.
- The first resurrection will include saints of the OT economy, plus church age saints who died before the tribulation period as well as those who died during it.
- However, it is best to take this as a resurrection of the righteous at the Second Coming and the wicked after the millennium (dispensational premillennialism).
- The resurrection of OT/Tribulation saints is separated from the resurrection of unbelievers by 1000 years.
- Daniel would not have known about this separation between the resurrections but that is what is taught in Revelation 20:4-5
- Verse 4 refers to the resurrection of OT/Tribulation saints at Christ's Second Coming.
- Verse 5 ("the rest of the dead") refers to the unsaved dead of all time at the end of the Millennium.
- (The phrase "this is the first resurrection" refers back to those in verse 4, so the first part of verse 5 is a parenthesis.)
- Those resurrected wicked then must face the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev 20:11-15).
- This promise of a resurrection would have brought great hope to Israel in the midst of their exile.

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" (cf. Dan 11:33, 35) refers to those who were able to see through the unbelief and wickedness of their generation and put their confidence by faith in Christ.
- The wisest of all men are those who come Christ; everybody else is a fool.
- Those Jews who believe in Christ will "shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven...like the stars forever and ever."
- A comparison is made with the stars because they are bright objects and they fittingly picture the idea of people shining with the bright glory of God.
- "Just as stars display their beauty and glory in the sky, a bright (glorious) future and a great reward (which includes God's blessings and great honor) awaits those who were wise enough to comprehend and obey spiritual truth and who led others to repent of their sins and live a righteous life...The decision to follow Christ and put his kingdom first will be rewarded."²²⁵
- This is a description of the reward of the righteous following the resurrection.
- Their reward is that they will shine with the same glory as the stars in the heavens.

²²⁵ Miller 1994: 319-320.

- This is a promise that those who are faithful to God and turn to Christ will be rewarded by the capacity to reflect the blazing glory of God.
- Those who are faithful to the Lord and turn others to the Lord will have the capacity to eternally radiate the glory of God.
- This privilege of shining in glory is a reward for all true believers (cf. Matt 13:43; Rom 8:18, 21; 1 Thess 2:12; 1 Pet 5:10).
- Believers will one day share in God's glory!
- "In summary, a number of truths concerning the resurrection are set forth in this passage. First, it is a bodily resurrection. The body is brought out of the grave and infused with new life. Second, this new body is immortal. Third, even unbelievers will spend eternity in bodily form. Fourth, the resurrected saints receive great honor and great reward, whereas the opposite is true for unbelievers."²²⁶

2. The Conclusion of the Book (vs. 4-13)

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.

- Daniel is told to preserve this message so that people will be able to understand it in the "end of time," a reference to the Tribulation.
- A sealed text was not to be changed or tampered with in any way.
- It was necessary for Daniel to preserve this message because, in the end of days, many people will be looking for answers that will be found in this book.
- Daniel and his immediate readers would not have understood all the details in this book since much of what is prophesied would be unfolded hundreds and thousands of years from their time.
- But, in the Tribulation, people will search for answers to all the devastation around them and they will find the answers they are looking for in this book.
- Thus, the fullest understanding of Daniel will not come until the Great Tribulation when this book will be reopened by the people of God and studied all over again such that "knowledge will increase."
- The message of this book will be needed in the future for that generation that "will undergo the horrors of the tribulation...and will need the precious promises contained in the Book of Daniel – that God will be victorious over the kingdoms of this world and that the suffering will last for only a brief time – to sustain them."²²⁷

Daniel 12:5-8 ~ 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?" 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

²²⁶ Ibid., 320.

²²⁷ Ibid., 321.

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

- The "two others" (vs. 5) whom Daniel saw were probably angels.
- One angel asked the other how long this great distress would last and when these promises would be fulfilled (vs. 6).
- The response is that it would last "a time, times, and half a time," namely 3 ½ years, a reference to the last half of the Tribulation.
- Those years will result in "shattering the power of the holy people" (vs. 7), a reference to how Israel's power will be broken by the ruthless Antichrist and they will be defeated by their enemies.
- He will break their power utterly and totally and will bring upon them a time of trouble like no other in history.
- They will be so crushed that they will have nowhere to go but to Christ, whom they will finally turn to.
- Daniel obviously could not understand all of this, so he asked how it would take place (vs. 8).
- Though he no doubt understood the 3 ½ years, he did not understand the details regarding how God would end the trouble and bring in Israel's restoration.

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

- Daniel was graciously counseled to be occupied with his way, a way that involved all the matters that are God's will for him until he is ushered into God's presence.
- He was not to be concerned about gaining further revelation about future things for his own information or to tell others; that would come 600 years later when John received further revelation from the Lord on the island of Patmos.
- What does it mean that the "words are concealed and sealed up until the end time"?
 - It doesn't mean that the book can't be opened and studied until the end.
 - It doesn't mean that there won't be more details given in the NT about the end (cf. Matt 24-25; 2 Thess 2; Rev 6-20).
 - It may mean that the words of this last vision have come to a completion and will remain in this form until the end.

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."

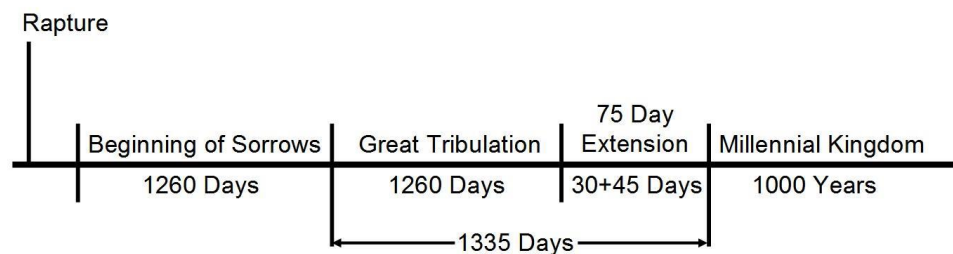
- The same three words ("purged, purified, refined") were used in Daniel 11:35.
- Many Jews will be saved during the Great Tribulation and will come to an understanding of all these events.
- They will be purified by their trials and brought to a saving knowledge of Christ.

- But the wicked will continue to follow and worship Antichrist.
- “It is always important for God’s people to realize why it is that ‘none of the wicked will understand’ prophetic writings such as the book of Daniel. It is not a lack of academic brilliance...The problem is always spiritual blindness...God does not hereby place a premium on ignorance...but rather emphasizes the total inaccessibility of spiritual wisdom to those who are brilliant but unregenerate.”²²⁸

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!”

- Some final details were revealed to Daniel concerning the timing of the last days.
- Two different periods of days are mentioned here: 1290 and 1335 days.
- It is best to take these days as literal days (as opposed to symbolically) and the time period directly connected to the 1260 days of the Tribulation.
- The last half of the Tribulation is designated as “time, times, and half a time” (Dan 7:25; 12:7; Rev 12:14), 42 months (Rev 11:2), and 1260 days (Rev 11:3; 12:6).
- These additional days must be an extension of days past the end of the Tribulation.

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- Verse 11 indicates that the 1290 days begins when “the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up.”
- From the middle of the tribulation when the Antichrist stops regular sacrifice and commits the abomination of desolation until the end there will be 1290 days
- The extra 30 days could be used for Christ’s judgment of the nations (cf. Joel 3:1-17; Matt 25:31-46).

²²⁸ Whitcomb 1985: 167.

²²⁹ Chart taken from <http://bereaninternetministry.org/Papers/Timing and Teaching of Christ's Second Coming.pdf>, accessed Nov 28, 2018.

- Those 30 days of judging might be to determine who has a right to enter the millennial Kingdom.
- The extra 45 days beyond the 30 days (vs. 12) might provide the time necessary to establish the government of the Messianic kingdom and prepare for its official inauguration.
- These 45 days would allow Christ to restore the throne and the kingdom to Himself and set up his eternal rule upon the earth.
- The one who waits expectantly during the Tribulation for this restoration will be “blessed” (vs. 12).
- The Tribulation saint will have a hope beyond their present suffering in the Messianic kingdom (Dan 2, 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.”

- Daniel is also given a hope personally as his “way” is described here.
- He would soon die as he was close to 90 years old at this point and no additional revelations would be given to him.
- He would enter into “rest” with life in the presence of God in spirit.
- Then, at the end, at the Second Coming of Christ, he will be raised to life (cf. vs. 2) and will be given his place of blessing and privilege of usefulness in the glorious reign of Christ in the kingdom.
- The book concludes with great hope for Israel.
- The times of the Gentiles will not last forever and Israel will not be oppressed forever.
- God is in control and will place Christ on His eternal throne at the appointed time and God’s people will experience all that has been promised for them.
- Then Israel’s long-awaited blessings will be realized.

C. Theology Notes

D. Preaching Helps

1. Todd’s Outline (1 message):

Hope of a Future Rescue (vs. 1)

Hope of a Future Resurrection (vs. 2-3)

Hope of a Future Restoration (vs. 4-13)