

Darkness Before the Dawn

Daniel 12; Coast Community Church; Pastor Earl Miles; 11-6-2022

Introduction

Daniel is about God's sovereignty over history and the future of God's people. Especially in view in Daniel are God's sovereignty over pagan, tyrannical governments and the events leading up to the coming of the Messiah with a call to faithfulness.

- Ch 1: The King's Food (Daniel rejects)
- Ch 2: The King's Dream (Daniel interprets)
- Ch 3: The King's Idol (Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace)
- Ch 4: The King's Insanity (Nebuchadnezzar becomes an animal)
- Ch 5: The King's Feast (Belshazzar sees the handwriting on the wall)
- Ch 6: The King's Edict (Daniel in the lion's den)
- Ch 7: Vision of the Four Beasts
- Ch 8: Vision of the Ram and Goat
- Ch 9: Daniel's Prayer and the Answer
- Ch 10-12: A Foreshadowing of the End

What will happen after the Exile is ended? When will Messiah come? What will happen before and after Messiah comes? 1st time? 2nd time?

1. There will be darkness before the dawn. (1-4)

¹ Now **at that time** (at the time of the end) **Michael, the great prince** (Christ or an Angel) who stands *guard* over the sons of your people, **will arise** (to protect God's people). And there will be **a time of distress** (Matthew 24; 2 Thessalonians 2; Revelation 13-14) 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** (the elect people of God), will be **rescued** (rapture; Matthew 24; 1 Thessalonians 4; 2 Thessalonians 1). ² Many of **those who sleep in the dust of the ground** (the dead) will **awake**, these **to everlasting life**, but the others **to disgrace and everlasting contempt** (resurrection of the righteous and wicked; John 5; Acts 24:15). ³ Those **who have insight** (saving faith) will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those **who lead the many to righteousness** (obedient, faithful witnesses), like the stars forever and ever. ⁴ But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and **seal up the book** (preserve it for future generations) until **the end of time** (the end of the world); **many will go back and forth** (many generations; in search of knowledge), and **knowledge will increase** (technology).” – Daniel 12:1-4

Matthew 24:9-22, 29-31; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Thessalonians 1:3-10; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:14-15; Habakkuk 3:16-19

2. It will be significant but shortened. (5-7)

⁵ Then I, Daniel, looked and behold, two others were standing, one on this bank of the **river** (stream; Tigris) and the other on that bank of the river. ⁶ And one said to **the man dressed in**

linen (angel giving the revelations to Daniel), who was above the waters of the river, “**How long** (how long will the time of distress be?) *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** (doubly serious oath), and swore by **Him who lives forever** (the true God) that it would be for **a time, times, and half a time** (an undefined but significant but shortened time of persecution; Matthew 24:22); and as soon as they **finish shattering the power of the holy people** (persecuting the church to almost the point of extinction; Romans 8; Revelation 13), all these *events* will be completed. – Daniel 12:5-7

2 Timothy 3:1-9; Revelation 13:5-10; Psalm 13:1-6; Mark 13:14-20; Luke 18:1-8

3. It will be for our holiness and happiness. (8-13)

⁸ As for me, **I heard but could not understand** (prophets kept in the dark to some degree; 2 Peter 1:10-12); so I said, “**My lord, what will be the outcome of these events?**” (“What will be result of all these things, especially the shattering of the power of the holy people? How will this keep God’s promises to His people? How will God work this for good? Can you give me more information?”)⁹ He said, “**Go your way, Daniel, for these words are concealed and sealed up until the end time.**” (“There is no need to give you a detailed answer; you have all you need to trust and love in your generation; others will have more to trust and love in the last generation!”)

¹⁰ **Many will be purged, purified and refined** (believers will have their faith tested and grown through trials; 1 Peter 1; James 1; Hebrews 11-12), but the wicked will act wickedly (believers should not be surprised or disheartened by the apparent victory of evil over good; Psalm 73); and **none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand** (believers will not be caught sleeping when the return of Christ is near and their redemption draws nigh but it will be like the days of Noah for unbelievers; 1 Thessalonians 5; Matthew 24; Luke 21).

¹¹ From **the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up** (reference to the atrocities under Antiochus Epiphanes who persecuted the people of God; figurative of a time of apostasy and great persecution; Matthew 24; 2 Thessalonians 2), *there will be 1,290 days* (reference to the 3 ½ years of persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes; figurative reference to a time of significant but shortened time of persecution; Matthew 24).¹² How blessed is he who keeps waiting and attains to the **1,335 days** (figurative reference to endurance regardless of how long the persecution lasts; endure to the end; Matthew 24:22)!¹³ But as for you, go *your way* to the end; then **you will enter into rest and rise again** (death and resurrection of Daniel; 1 Corinthians 15; 1 Thessalonians 4) for your allotted portion at **the end of the age** (end of the world; end of this age leading to the age to come; Matthew 12:32; Mark 10:30; Ephesians 1:21; Hebrews 6:5).” – Daniel 12:8-13

Psalm 73:1-3; 1 Peter 1:3-9; James 1:2-4; Matthew 24:36-41; Luke 21:25-36; Matthew 24:4-14; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; John 12:20-26