

The Time of the End

Daniel 12:1-13 (NIV)

12 “At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered. ² Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. ³ Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever. ⁴ But you, Daniel, roll up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge.”

⁵ Then I, Daniel, looked, and there before me stood two others, one on this bank of the river and one on the opposite bank. ⁶ One of them said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, “How long will it be before these astonishing things are fulfilled?” ⁷ The man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, lifted his right hand and his left hand toward heaven, and I heard him swear by him who lives forever, saying, “It will be for a time, times and half a time. When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed.” ⁸ I heard, but I did not understand. So I asked, “My lord, what will the outcome of all this be?” ⁹ He replied, “Go your way, Daniel, because the words are rolled up and sealed until the time of the end. ¹⁰ Many will be purified, made spotless and refined, but the wicked will continue to be wicked. None of the wicked will understand, but those who are wise will understand. ¹¹ “From the time that the daily sacrifice is abolished and the abomination that causes desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days. ¹² Blessed is the one who waits for and reaches the end of the 1,335 days. ¹³ “As for you, go your way till the end. You will rest, and then at the end of the days you will rise to receive your allotted inheritance.”

The Time of the End

Daniel 12 is the final chapter in the Book of Daniel, concluding the long-range prophecy given to Daniel by the angel Gabriel. It focuses on the end times, revealing a period of unparalleled distress, known as the Tribulation, which will be the most terrible time on Earth. This chapter also promises resurrection and judgment, encouraging believers to find hope in God's plan for the future and apply these teachings with faith and trust.

A. Tough Times Ahead

Daniel 12 reveals a time of great tribulation, unprecedented in history, as mentioned in Matthew 24:21. This period of intense distress is a key feature of the prophecy, signalling the end times and the culmination of the vision that began in Daniel 9. Despite the terrifying outlook, there is a promise of resurrection and judgment, offering hope and a call to understand these complex prophecies to strengthen faith in God's future plans.

B. The Final Deliverance

The archangel Michael is identified as the protector of God's people, signifying a critical moment in the spiritual battle. Amidst the turmoil, there is a promise of deliverance, with God's people assured of protection during this time of trouble. This chapter emphasizes the need for wisdom and understanding, reminding believers that God's protection and promises are constant, even in the most difficult circumstances.

C. Revelations Concerning the Resurrection

The chapter also reveals the resurrection of the dead, where some will rise to everlasting life and others to shame and everlasting contempt. The wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead others to righteousness will shine like stars forever. Daniel is instructed to seal the scroll until the end times, indicating that these prophecies were intended for a future generation, preserving God's plan for a time yet to come.

D. Time of the End – Are We There Yet?

Daniel's vision speaks of a time when knowledge will increase, and people will be busier than ever. This surge in understanding and the explosion of scientific, medical, and technical knowledge are signs of the approaching end. However, this period will also see an increase in wickedness, with many remaining blind to the truth despite the enlightenment. The wise, however, will understand, and those who endure to the end will be blessed.

E. The Sealed Prophecy

Daniel is told to seal the scroll until the end times, as the prophecy is meant for a future generation. The chapter describes a period of intense persecution, symbolized by the shattering of the power of the holy people. This time of trial and purification will be followed by the fulfillment of God's promises, signalling the end of an era and the establishment of God's kingdom.

F. Practical Applications for Believers Today

Believers are encouraged to trust in God's sovereignty, live with an eternal perspective, pursue wisdom and righteousness, endure with hope, increase in knowledge and understanding, and be prepared for spiritual battles. These practical applications help guide daily life, strengthening faith in the face of challenges and uncertainties.

G. Conclusion

Daniel 12 emphasizes the importance of Michael's protection, the promise of resurrection, and the significance of the sealed prophecy. Despite the tough times ahead, believers are reminded that Jesus will return to reign. The chapter calls for righteous living, the pursuit of wisdom, and finding hope in the promise of eternal life, offering encouragement through the assurance of deliverance and resurrection.