

## CONNECTIONS TO THE NEW TESTAMENT

Jesus explained more about the “time of distress” (12:1), noting that those days will be limited (12:11): Matthew 24:21–22 — “For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again. If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.”

Michael’s defense of Israel (12:1) is elaborated in Revelation 12:7–9: “And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.”

The book that records the name of everyone who will be delivered (12:1) is the “book of life” mentioned in Exod 32:33; Ps 69:28; Isa 4:3; Mal 3:16; Luke 10:20; Rev 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27.

Jesus essentially quoted 12:2 in describing his future role as judge. John 5:28–29 — “Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.” See also Matt 25:46 and Acts 24:15.

Jesus said that the “righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father” (Matt 13:43; cf. Dan 12:3).

Daniel was told to seal up the scroll until the time of the end (12:4), while John was told to not seal his book “because the time is near” (Rev 22:10).

The “three and a half times” (12:7) figures prominently in the book of Revelation (11:3; 12:6; 13:5) as the time when the beast is given authority to rule and make war against Israel.

## DANIEL 12: TRIBULATION AND RESURRECTION

### THE MESSAGE OF DANIEL 12

The time of great distress will last three and a half times at the end of which all whose names are written in the book will be resurrected to everlasting life.

### OUTLINE OF DANIEL 12

- I. The angel interprets the vision of the great war, beginning with Daniel’s time (11:2–12:3).
  - A. Persia and Greece (11:2–4)
  - B. The Seleucids and the Ptolemies (11:5–20)
  - C. Two future little horns (11:21–12:3)
    1. Victories of Antiochus IV over Ptolemy VI (11:21–28).
    2. The defeat of Antiochus IV in Egypt leads him to attack Jerusalem and set up the abomination of desolation (11:29–32).
    3. Jewish (Maccabean) rebellion against Antiochus IV (11:33–35).
    4. The character, actions, and destiny of the future king are described (11:36–45).
    5. At the time of the king’s defeat, the people of Israel will be delivered and the final resurrection will occur (12:1–3).
- II. Daniel seeks clarification about the vision (12:4–13).
  - A. Daniel is instructed to preserve the revelation for the future (12:4).
  - B. An angel explains that the events will take three and a half times (12:5–7).
  - C. Daniel learns that his revelation is for the righteous remnant (12:8–10).
  - D. The angel explains that the time between the abomination of desolation and the deliverance is 1,290 days (12:11–12).
  - E. The angel exhorts Daniel to trust the Lord until his death, for he will be resurrected (12:13).

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**What is the time of distress mentioned in verse 1?** This is the same period that was described as a period of persecution of God's people in chapters 7, 9, and 11. This is the final period of tribulation before Israel is delivered. Jesus spoke directly about it in Matt 24:21.

**Does verse 2 suggest that believers and unbelievers will be resurrected at the same time?** It could indicate this, but later revelation clarifies that believers are raised first to enjoy the earthly kingdom of the Messiah and unbelievers are raised after the thousand years to be sent to eternal torment (Rev 20:5-15).

**Who are the wise in verse 3?** In this context it is speaking of those Israelites who fear the Lord and share their faith with others in the final tribulation period.

**Why is Daniel commanded to hide the words of this vision (verse 4)?** The command to "seal" the scroll is not to hide its contents but to preserve and protect it. What is written in it is particularly important for those who will be living in the time of great persecution at the end.

**Who are the two people on the banks of the river and the one hovering over the river (verses 5-7)?** The ones on the banks apparently lack some understanding and must be angels. The one "clothed in linen" is the same one described with awesome language in 10:5-6. Unlike the angels, he knows the answer to the question, and he is best identified with the preincarnate Christ.

**Is Daniel supposed to understand everything?** Apparently not, for in verse 9 he is told to "go [his] way" for the words are "closed up." Some of this revelation may only make sense to those who are living through it in (future) history.

**Why are the "wicked" contrasted with the "wise" in verse 10?** It is common in the Bible to associate closely one's knowledge with one's actions. The one who lives an ungodly life is "foolish," and the one who is inclined to holiness is wise. The beginning of wisdom, after

all, is the "fear of the Lord." It also seems likely that the righteous will understand because their eyes are opened and not blinded by wickedness, just as we see in Isaiah 6 and Matthew 13.

**What is the significance of 1,290 days in verse 11?** The first observation that most make is that the three and a half times in verse 7 comes out to 1,260 days (see Dan 9:27; Rev 11:3; 12:6). Because of difficulty in understanding what this means, many interpreters say that all of these numbers are symbolic and no attempt should be made to study them carefully. The precision of the numbers and the explanation that these matters are difficult to understand indicates that we should take these numbers literally. The question then concerns why there are 30 extra days here. While we simply cannot be certain about this, one good suggestion is that these 30 days refer to the time between Jesus' arrival on earth and the establishment of his kingdom. Perhaps during this time Jesus is judging living unbelievers so that they do not enter his kingdom (see Matt 13:30, 39-43, 49-50).

**What is the meaning of the 1,335 days in verse 12?** Again, since this is not explicitly addressed anywhere in Scripture, we cannot know with certainty. Some have speculated that these additional 45 days are the period during which Jesus is establishing his kingly rule over the earth. What is clear is that the Lord knows exactly how the course of history will unfold and how it will be brought to a glorious conclusion with the destruction of the kingdoms that fight against the Lord and the establishment of his eternal kingdom headed by a divine figure who is "one like a son of man."

**What is the main point of this difficult passage?** The faithful remnant can take courage, knowing that all is in God's hands and that they will be raised at the resurrection to receive their reward at the end of days (12:13).