

Daniel 12:3-13 – The Book is Sealed

Chapter 12 contains the end of the vision which started at the beginning of chapter 10. The vision occurred in the third year of Cyrus the Great. The content of the vision started with the Medo-Persian empire in 11:2b. Some understand the vision to end with the death of Antiochus Epiphanes. Others understand the vision to end during the Roman empire. Others understand the vision to end with the death of the antichrist, and the resurrection of the dead. 12:3-4 are the concluding verses of the vision's content. Dale Ralph Davis refers to 12:5-13 as the footnotes to the vision.

Read Daniel 12:3-4.

In verse 3, what is true of those who are wise? What is true of those who turn many to righteousness? Who are these people? (12:3)

In verse 4, what was Daniel told to do? In 8:26, Daniel was told to seal up the vision. Was the vision to be sealed so that it would be secret or was it sealed so that it would be verified, preserved and safe? Some believe that the end of verse 4 means that people will futilely seek to understand the vision but will not be able to. Others believe that the meaning is that people will diligently seek to understand the vision and will increase in their understanding of it. What do you think the end of verse 4 means? (12:4)

Read Daniel 12:5-13.

What did Daniel see in verse 5? (12:5)

Verse 6 refers back to 10:4-6 and the one clothed in linen. Where was the man clothed in linen? What did someone ask the man clothed in linen? What does the "end of the wonders" refer to? (12:6)

In verse 7, what did the man clothed in linen do before he swore by God? Usually someone raises their right hand before swearing an oath. What is the significance of raising both hands? How long would the "end of wonders" last? "A time, times and half a time" was used in 7:25 to refer to the time that the saints would be persecuted by the "little horn". The phrase is also found in Revelation 12:14. Are 12:7 and 7:25 referring to the same time period? (12:7)

In verse 7, what is the “shattering of the power of the holy people”? Some amillennialists who are pessimistic about history and the time of the antichrist before the second coming of Christ understand this verse to refer to that difficult time. Some postmillennialists who are optimistic about history understand this verse to refer to the gathering of the Jews back to Israel and their acceptance of Jesus as their Messiah. (12:7)

In verse 8, even though Daniel did not ask the question about “how long”, what are we told about Daniel’s understanding of the answer? Daniel had a follow up question. What was Daniel’s question? The question was very appropriate if “the shattering of the power of the holy people” is understood as being a very unpleasant and trying experience for the people of God. (12:8)

In verse 9, what was the response to Daniel’s question? In verse 4, Daniel was told to shut up the words and seal the book until the time of the end. In verse 9, it was said that “the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end”. (12:9)

Daniel did not get his answer in verse 9, but in verses 10-12 he was given somewhat of an answer. How will the many be purified, made white, and refined? What do the wicked do? In verse 8, Daniel did not understand, but in verse 10, who will understand? What will they understand? Does this mean that the wise who live during the time of persecution spoken of will understand the vision given to Daniel? (12:10)

Verse 11 mentions two events as the beginning of a time period. The regular burnt offering is taken away and the abomination that makes desolate is set up. Or is the taking away of the offering the beginning and the abomination the end of the time period? Is “the regular burnt offering” literal? Does there need to be a functioning temple in Jerusalem for this to be fulfilled? These two events happened under Antiochus Epiphanes. The burnt offerings were also stopped when the temple was destroyed in AD 70. Will these events also happen during the time of the man of lawlessness? See 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4. Which time period is meant in verse 11? Is the 1,290 days literal. It is basically 3.5 years plus one month. Blessed are those who arrive at the 1,335 days. What is the significance of the additional 45 days? (12:11-12)

In verse 13, Daniel was told to go his way until the end. What does “end” mean in this context? What encouragement was given to Daniel? What did “end” mean in the context of “end of the days”? What did this encouragement mean?