

SALVATION IN SYMBOLS & SIGNS

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Corresponds to Program 112

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the NKJV and KJV.

Daniel 12 – Part 2 STUDY GUIDE

Daniel 12:4-10

Biblically understood to mark the completion of the prophetic “day-for-a-year” periods given in Daniel 12, the “time of the end” began in 1798. It denotes a time when knowledge, both scriptural and technological, would be increased.

Only as the Bible became available to the people could the prophetic prediction find fulfillment: “...many shall run to and fro [in the Bible], and knowledge [of Daniel’s prophecies] shall increase” (Daniel 12:4). The increased availability of the Bible brought in its wake a worldwide interest in Bible prophecy and increased knowledge of certain portions of prophecy previously sealed against human understanding. Another indication of the beginning of the “time of the end” is the amazing increase in knowledge of technology. One newspaper article dating back to the 1800s cited the rapid strides the world was making in science, general intelligence, and inventions as the most striking characteristic of the times. Another commented that there was never such activity of invention within the history of mankind. In 1798, the cast iron plow and gas lighting were still recent developments. Steam-powered machinery was a new exploration. And electricity was an interesting laboratory experiment.

Of special interest to Daniel were the specific time periods brought to view in his visions. Daniel did not understand the significance of the time prophecies and so he was commanded by the angel to seal up that portion of the 2,300-prophetic-day prophecy that he could not fully comprehend. The 2,300-day prophecy of Daniel 8:14 encompasses an extensive period of

time from 457 B.C. to A.D. 1844. All of the other shorter-time prophecies fit within the framework of the 2,300 prophetic days (literal years). The seventy weeks in chapter 9 cover the first segment of the 2,300 prophetic days as noted in our Daniel 9 studies. It brings to view the redemptive work of Jesus Christ during His earthly ministry, beginning in A.D. 27 and concluding with His crucifixion in A.D. 31. The stoning of Ste-

phen in A.D. 34 at the end of the seventy weeks brings us to the close of probation for Israel as a nation. The time periods in Daniel 12, specifically the 1,290 and 1,335 days, deal with the latter portion of the 2,300 prophetic days. These illustrate issues relating to the mediatorial work of Jesus Christ, and the attacks by and final defeat of the antichrist.



“But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.” **DANIEL 12:4**

Daniel 12:11-12

The starting date for both the 1,290- and 1,335-prophetic-day prophecies is the same, from the time that “the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up” (Daniel 12:11). In a previous study, we discovered that the “daily,” brought into view in Daniel’s visions, includes the continual salvation work of Christ for the remission of sins.

The “abomination of desolation” is the papal system of human priesthood that has been set up in the place of Christ’s salvation mediation.

If we can locate in history the approximate time when the papal church began to establish its own desolating priesthood in the place of Christ’s healing mediation, then we will have the beginning point for the 1,290- and 1,335-prophetic-day prophecies. The historical records direct our attention to the period of time between A.D. 503 and A.D. 508.

KEY SCRIPTURES

Daniel 12:4 MANY SHALL RUN TO AND FRO

Daniel 12:10 THE WISE SHALL UNDERSTAND

Daniel 12:12 BLESSED IS HE THAT WAITETH

Daniel 12:13 GO THOU THY WAY TILL THE END

“Inasmuch as the taking away of the continual mediation of Christ is made the beginning of a prophetic period, there must be some definite act at some definite time which, in form and intent, takes from Christ His priestly work in the heavenly sanctuary. This act was the official decree of an ecclesiastical council held at Rome in 503 A.D., by which it was declared ‘that the Pope was judge as God’s vicar, and could himself be judged by no one.’” See Hardouins “Councils,” Vol. II, page 983; Labbe and Cossart’s “Councils,” Vol. IV, col. 1364; and Bower’s “History of the Popes” (three-volume edition), Vol. I, pages 304, 305.

“The work of Clovis king of the Franks, who earned for himself the title of ‘the eldest son of the church’ by his campaigns to subdue the kingdoms hostile to the Papacy, contributed much toward putting into practical effect this claim of the Papacy, which finally resulted in establishing the Pope as the head of the Roman priesthood which has usurped the priestly work of Christ, and has established another system of mediation in its place. This work of Clovis came to its climax in the period 503-508, and this period therefore becomes the natural one from which to date the 1290 years of Dan. 12:11, which would accordingly end in the period 1793-98, at the same time as the 1260 years of Dan. 7:25” (Bible Readings for the Home Circle, p. 229, 1914 edition).

By the year A.D. 508, the ecclesiastical authority of the church was established. This led to an earthly priesthood being set up as a counterfeit to the mediatorial ministry of Jesus Christ, obscuring Christ’s mercy from millions of people. This is how the “daily” was taken away and the “abomination of desolation” was set up.

Counting down through history 1,290 days from A.D. 508 brings us to no significant end of papal rule. We must remember, as we have noted in previous studies, that in Bible prophecy, one prophetic day is equal to a literal year (Ezekiel 4:6; Numbers 14:34). When we employ the day-for-a-year principle of prophetic interpretation, Daniel’s time prophecies make perfect sense. Counting down through history 1,290 years from A.D. 508 brings us to the highly significant year of 1798. In that very year, under orders from Napoleon, General Berthier marched into Rome and took the pope captive. This brought a termination to the long 1,290-year period of the papacy’s ecclesiastical rule over the souls of men.

Daniel 12:7

Bible prophecy also delineated the exact period of time that the papacy would exercise political authority. After rising to ecclesiastical prominence by A.D. 508, the papacy steadily gained influence until finally, in A.D. 538, the Roman church had gained devastating civil power as well. Bible prophecy indicated that this aspect of the papacy’s reign would endure for 1,260 years (Daniel 7:25; 12:7; Revelation 12:6, 14; 13:5, 7). The closing time for the 1,260 years of political rule for the papacy

ended in 1798, as did the 1,290 years of religious dominance.

What, then, is the significance of the 1,335 years of Daniel 12:12? You will notice that a special blessing is pronounced upon those who experience the fulfillment of the 1,335 prophetic-day prophecy: “Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days” (Daniel 12:12). The beginning date for the 1,335 years is the same as the 1,290 years—A.D. 508. But while the 1,290 years comes to an end in 1798, the 1,335 years extend to the year 1843. We must look at this period of history to discover the fulfillment of the blessing pronounced upon those who live at the end of the 1,335-year prophecy.

There is only one possible fulfillment that presents itself. In 1843, historical records reveal an extensive, worldwide movement of serious Bible study, with special emphasis on the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. A man by the name of William Miller had devoted many years to the study of Daniel’s prophecies. Having taken a special interest in the time prophecy of Daniel 8:14, Miller rightly concluded that the 2,300 prophetic day prophecy extended from 457 B.C. to A.D. 1844. While Miller had the correct time, he was wrong concerning the event that would occur at the conclusion of the 2,300 years. Supposing that the sanctuary to be cleansed in Daniel 8:14 represented this earth to be cleansed by fire at the second coming of Christ, William Miller and the large revival movement that arose around him concluded that Jesus would return to Earth around 1843 or 1844. To their extreme disappointment, the time came and passed and Jesus did not come.

But even this disappointing experience was foretold in Bible prophecy. In Revelation 10, we find a significant parallel passage to Daniel’s prophecies. The link between Daniel’s prophecies and those of John in the book of Revelation is clear. Notice the following parallel passages between Daniel and Revelation:

- Jesus appears to Daniel in a glorified state (Daniel 10:5-6)
- Jesus appears to John in a glorified state (Revelation 10:1)
- Daniel is told that his book of prophecy is to be sealed until the end time (Daniel 12:4, 9)
- A little book is open in the book of Revelation (Revelation 10:2)
- Daniel sees Jesus standing on the waters of the river (Daniel 12:6)
- John sees Jesus standing on the sea and the earth (Revelation 10:2)
- Daniel sees Jesus lift up His hands to heaven (Daniel 12:7)
- John sees Jesus lift up His hand to heaven (Revelation 10:5)
- Daniel sees Jesus swear by Him that lives forever (Daniel 12:7)

- John sees Jesus swear by Him that lives forever and ever (Revelation 10:6)
- Daniel hears Jesus say that there shall be time prophecies extending into the future (Daniel 12:7, 11-12)
- John hears a declaration from Jesus that there shall be “delay no longer,” the time prophecies have reached their fulfillment (Revelation 10:6)

It is very clear that both Daniel and John saw a vision of Christ. The only difference is what the two prophets saw with regard to the time prophecies. Daniel was given the time prophecies as a period during which his book would be sealed up. John was shown the time when Daniel’s prophecies would be unsealed and the book of Daniel would be open, as it was in the hand of the angel (Revelation 10:2). John was also shown another aspect of the history that would surround the fulfillment of the time prophecies.

Revelation 10:8-11

Here we have the great disappointment of 1844 foretold in Bible prophecy. Follow what John is told very carefully:

1. The sealed book of Daniel, with its time prophecies relating to the end of human history, is to be opened and understood.
2. When the truth of the little book is eaten up (that is, studied and taken in), it will be sweet to the taste. For the second advent movement of the 1840s, it was truly sweet to anticipate the second coming of Jesus Christ.
3. The experience would turn out to be bitter rather than sweet. When 1844 passed, and the believers in the second advent realized that Jesus was not going to come at the time they had expected, it was a bitter disappointment.
4. Then Jesus explained that this disappointment would not be the end of the advent movement. “...You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings” (verse 11).

After the disappointment passed, those who held on to their faith in Christ began to diligently study the Bible to understand the cause of their bitter experience. They could find no miscalculation with regard to the mathematical aspect of Daniel’s prophecies. The starting date of 457 B.C. was too certain to be moved, and if the starting date was correct, then the ending date was simply a matter of counting 2,300 years beyond 457 B.C. From this, they concluded that the year 1844 was of significance. They had not misunderstood the timing involved in the prophecy, but they had misunderstood the event that was to occur at the end of the prophetic period.

Upon further study, something truly wonderful began to happen. The promise, “Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to

the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days” (Daniel 12:12), was truly fulfilled. This blessing came upon those who waited through the bitter disappointment, and through prayerful study of the Scriptures, rediscovered the sanctuary truth of the Bible and the mediatorial ministry of Jesus Christ.

Had not Daniel been told that the daily or continual ministry of Christ would be taken away, and in its place a desolating abomination set up? (Daniel 12:11). Had not Daniel been told that the antichrist would exalt himself above the Prince, Jesus Christ, and cast down His sanctuary? (Daniel 8:11) And had not Daniel been told that this awful, counterfeit system of religion would obscure the Gospel of Christ for 1,290 and 1,335 years?

Now the time prophecies were understood. The papal rule had been broken in 1798. The freedom to study the Scriptures had yielded a profitable harvest of understanding, culminating in the revival movement of the 1840s. While the disappointment was great when Jesus did not come as expected, the blessing for those who waited and continued to look to heaven for light was truly tremendous. The high priestly ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary was rediscovered. It was realized that the judgment hour of human history had arrived. The everlasting gospel must be proclaimed to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people. Spiritual Babylon, the colossal counterfeit system of Christianity propagated by the papacy, had fallen and the true Gospel of Jesus Christ began to arise from obscurity and enlighten the hearts and minds of men. One beautiful Bible truth after another was rediscovered and an end-time movement of worldwide gospel proclamation was born (Revelation 14:6-12).

Read Daniel 12:13

Daniel’s prophetic journey draws to a close. He is told, “you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days” (Daniel 12:13). All of the time prophecies have reached their fulfillment and bring us to the solemn realization that we are living at the very end of time. There is only one vital task that now presents itself to us.

Daniel 12:10; Revelation 10:7; Colossians 1:26; Matthew 24:14

We are waiting for the final purification of God’s people from earthly sin. Revelation calls this the “mystery of God.” Colossians identifies this as Christ in us, the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27). The God of Daniel calls upon us to proclaim the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ as a witness to all the world. That is the most important part. When the Gospel goes to all the world “as a witness,” as Christ in us, then the mystery of God is finished and the final end of sin and suffering can finally come.

Appeal

What a glorious hope is ours. To see Daniel standing in his appointed place at the end of the days and realizing what his prophecies mean in relationship to Jesus Christ and our sal-

vation—what a privilege! Now we are to take up the torch of truth, and through the infilling of the promised Holy Spirit, let our light shine. May this be our experience by the grace of God. In Jesus' name, amen. ★

