

Sermon to the Saints which are at Topeka, Kansas -- Sunday, March 15, 2026

“And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.” (Daniel 12:2-3)

In my last sermon, I opened up the final grouping of words found within the visions and teachings of Daniel chapters 10-12. Within the first eight eras identified within the prophecy, and at least up to where chapter 12 opens, we have seen the work of God toward the people of the Jews – from the days of Daniel in the 5th century BC through to the end of the church dispensation and to the days of Christ’s return¹. A series of sermons have outlined the supporting scripture and history that helps us to place those providential puzzle pieces into place.

Opening Daniel chapter 12 required an analysis of the transition between the first and second 3.5 year periods of the Day of the Lord, the nature of the ***“time of trouble”*** referenced, and the eternal truth that those of the Jews who are decreed to be delivered shall be. All of those discussions helped the reader to understand why an analysis of this prophecy mandates that there be a period demarcation between Daniel 11:45 and Daniel 12:1.

To properly move on to an exposition of the next verses in the prophecy, however, we have to shift our focus upon the whole of the two oracles within chapter 12². In our analysis of the first eight eras captured in the words from Gabriel to Daniel we have action. A lot of providential action, covering more than 2,500 years of history and eschatology regarding the Jews. Chapter 12 – opening the ninth era – begins with the same energy. Indeed, you perhaps *could* say that it raises the bar of energy and action to the highest pitch of the whole vision ... maybe the whole

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1. Daniel 11:2-4 relates to the completion of the Persian Empire and its fall to the Grecian King Alexander the Great.
 2. Daniel 11:5-14 relates to the ebb and flow of warfare between the dominant Grecian King of the South (Ptolemies) and King of the North (Seleucids) that was fought heavily across the cities in northern and southern Palestine – and created a lot of engagement with the Jewish people who were constantly trying to gain a foothold that would allow them to reclaim the Jewish state.
 3. Daniel 11:15-19 relates to the multiple wars under the strong period of the Seleucid kingdom under Antiochus the Great (Antiochus III), when the Jews were heavily involved in the transition of dominant Grecian power from the King of the South (Ptolemies) to the King of the North (Seleucids), and which also involved increased engagement by the emerging Roman Empire.
 4. Daniel 11:20 relates to the brief reign of Seleucus Philopator – the eldest son of Antiochus III, older brother to Antiochus IV. He was poisoned, making the way for his younger brother to take the throne.
 5. Daniel 11:21-31 relates to the rise of Antiochus Epiphanes (Antiochus IV) and how he demonstrates himself as the 5th iteration of Antichrist (including the abomination of desolation).
 6. Daniel 11:32-33a relates to the remainder of the inter-testamentary period that follows the treachery of Antiochus Epiphanes and the temporary establishment of a Jewish state.
 7. Daniel 11:33b – 35 relates to the New Testament period ... or more specifically the period between Christ’s crucifixion and His return.
 8. Daniel 11:36 – 45 relates to the activities contained in the first 3.5 years of the Apocalypse.
 9. **Daniel 12:1-13 relates to the activities contained in the second 3.5 years of the Apocalypse and transitions to the preparation of Christ’s millennial reign.**

² The first oracle contains verses 1-4. The second contains verses 5-13.

of the human experiment ... with the scene of the angels battling in heaven and earth while Antichrist brings the heaviest artillery at his disposal to end the campaign of Christ and His Jewish saints. Then after the first verse the providential energy precipitously ends and the whole focus seems to shift.

A humble apology is in order here, my friends. I have spent so many years chewing on the words of Daniel, including those in chapters ten to 12, that when the import of the conversation between Gabriel and Daniel began to gel in my understanding, my delight rather got the better of me. I fell into the pattern of seeing eras of human history being described, with what was showing itself as a dramatic dive into the Day of the Lord and the rise of Antichrist as chapter 11 was wrapping up and 12 was opening. It felt comfortable and sensible to me to chase that framing. But when chapter 12 became my exclusive focus, the major shift became evident. The lesson to be learned by my error is the caution against beginning in full reliance on the Holy Ghost to **“guide [us] into all truth” (John 16:13)** and then pushing toward our own wisdom when difficulties in our understanding arise. I sincerely apologize, therefore, for the overly simplistic characterization I have given this final part of the visions and guidance provided to Daniel.

Many times I have pursued the question of what the Scripture tells us about what will happen when time draws the creation to the cusp of the Jewish elect being reunited with Christ for the millennial kingdom and then onward to dwelling eternally with God. It always has felt like there is a veil pulled down over it beyond a certain point. Of course there has been, and it is consistently found in the writings of prophecy. Until the time appointed by God, we will only know a certain amount about eschatology. We will discuss these passages more at a later time, God willing.

First, let us look at what is happening with the first three verses found in the opening oracle. Rather than seeing it as simply a report of the ninth of the human eras, let us look at it as an answer to the question possessing our friend Daniel. As I have consistently reminded this little house of souls in my treatment of this last part of the book, Gabriel specifically tells Daniel **“I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days” (Daniel 10:14)**. I don't think this is to be understood as Gabriel giving Daniel a syllabus or a lesson plan outline, but rather giving some peace about a matter that was heavy upon Daniel's heart. He has lived through the Babylonian captivity and the awful audacity of that grotesquely blasphemous and violent people (today's generation could give them a run for their money). He has seen the destruction of that nation by the emerging Medo-Persian empire, and understood it to be coming as the prophet Isaiah declared!

“¶ Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.” (Isaiah 45:1-4)

This is a prophecy of God's appointment of this very Cyrus who is identified at the opening of the vision we have been examining – ***“in the third year of Cyrus king of Persia”*** – to conquer Babylon and order the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem. The stupid Jews of our dispensation worship this ancient tyrant, just as they are taking up the worship of President Trump at this very hour. Isaiah prophesied of Cyrus – by name – more than 200 years prior to these events.

So, when Daniel was given this vision – ***“he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision” (Daniel 10:1)*** – it no doubt filled his heart with dread regarding what would be the outcome of all this for the Jewish people? He knew of Isaiah's prophecy and his righteous spirit had to be utterly aflame about how it would all come together. Then, he sees this vision and discovers that there is much, much more appointed to come to pass. Gabriel's statement of assurance that he had come to tutor him on the import of it all ... or the detail of it all ... or a more comprehensive grasp of how it all would end ... was to resolve the distress of his heart and mind about what would happen to the Jews as a people. More specifically, how will all of these amazing things revealed to him in this vision (and others) bring to pass the fulfillment of God's promise to his temporal and spiritual fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – that they would dwell with Him forever in the promised land?

Let's examine the opening three verses of chapter 12 with that lens. Gabriel is telling Daniel, with some clarity, what would be the end of the experiment of the human race, as it pertains to the Jewish nation that was a peculiar people chosen by God as a temporal expression of His elect precious. As I read the words of Chapter 12, verses 1-3, I see Gabriel identifying three classifications or groupings of Jews:

1. Those Jews who existed up until the triumphant return of Jesus Christ;
2. Those Jews who will undergo the intense wrath and violence of the Antichrist beast and his world of violent men; and
3. Those Jews who will overcome that Beast and dwell in the earth with Christ during His millennial reign, and then forever in the presence of God (all three offices) in the newly Edenized heaven and earth.

Let us see, then, what Daniel is told regarding these three groupings of Jews. I have listed them in clean chronological order, but the prophecy does not. Without placing in this sermon all of the analysis done in my last sermon, I will ask that you review that to better understand the way I read these words from Gabriel to Daniel. Remember, please, that the writings of these prophecies were broken down into the chapter delineations based upon the best understanding of the drafters of the Canon, so while they are generally helpful, we do not in this instance need to put too much emphasis on the transition between chapter 11 and chapter 12. Except to see that there was a clear ending of one thing – ***“he [Antichrist #7] shall come to his end” (Daniel 11:45)*** – and then the beginning of another – ***“there shall be a time of trouble [at the hands of Antichrist #8]” (Daniel 12:1)***.

When Christ returns, there is a resurrection of those who sleep in Christ. We are familiar with what our brother Paul wrote in this regard:

“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)

There is then a general resurrection of the dead who are not blessed with the grace of God. That resurrection is contained in the events post-millennial – after the thousand years of earthly reign by Jesus Christ as King of earth and heaven – and is described by John like this:

“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.” (Revelation 20:12-13)

I do not intend to have a comprehensive treatment of this verse in this sermon. It is dense in scope. But a relatively simple statement about it can sustain us for our current examination. There is a **“book of life”** and there are **“books”**. The former contains the works flowing from the operation of grace within the elect of God over every generation of mankind. The latter contains the blasphemous works of all the remaining members of mankind who lived in their generation, died without the intervention of any grace, and await the calling forth by the eternal God on this horrifying judgment day. As brother Asaph ominously declares of God’s work in this judgment: **“but I will reprove thee, and set [all your evil works] in order before thine eyes”** (Psalm 50:21) ... from what is recorded in the books.

In many of the references to this dichotomy – the treatment of the elect and the non-elect with regard to the resurrection of the human body from the grave – it is referring to the whole of the human race. In this passage of Daniel chapter 12, however, it is not. It is the angel Gabriel speaking to Daniel about the Jewish people. When he says **“many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth”**, he is speaking about the Jews. Many of the Jews that sleep in the dust of the earth. Using this passage metaphorically as another indicator of the dichotomy is fine, and we certainly do that when we are plucking forth passages about how the elect are treated differently in matters of eternity. However, when we are drilling down on what Gabriel is talking about here, we need to be precise.

What the angel is telling Daniel here is that among his brethren who lived and died before Christ’s return, there are those who were Christ’s. Those will **“awake ... to everlasting life”**. There are also those who were not and will be sentenced to **“everlasting contempt”**. Another basis to

conclude that this is Gabriel's intended message, can be found in the Hebrew words making up this second verse. In the English, we have 25 words (one interpolated). In Hebrew, we have ten. Taking the meaning of the ten words, it more precisely reads something like this: ***"A great number of the Jews this vision is dealing with will be sleeping in Christ, waiting for His return. Those will awake to the promised everlasting life. The remainder defied, blasphemed, and reproached God and Christ; and they are appointed to everlasting contempt and abhorrence by God."*** I believe this language of verse two is informing Daniel of the eternal state of those who were in the grave at the time of Christ's return, as distinct from the two other groups he identifies in this oracle.

The second group identified are those who are in the earth during the period often referred to as the Great Tribulation ... or ***"a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time"*** (Daniel 12:1). As we examined in my last sermon, this group is also made up of two subsets: Those identified in the clause ***"thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book*** (Daniel 12:1); and those who are not.

Another passage within Revelation chapter 20 intimates that those who are God's elect – ***"found written in the book"*** – are given a very specific status, to wit:

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." (Revelation 20:4-6)

A distinct class of persons are being discussed here. They were killed during the fierce engagement with the final iteration of Antichrist. But they are awarded with a resurrection so that they are placed, together with their brethren who were not slain during that great time of tribulation, upon thrones to rule during Christ's millennial reign. This is not referring to the resurrection of those asleep in Christ who rise at His second coming. Those were plainly distinguished in the language of Revelation chapter 12. There were the saints who were represented by the ***"man child"*** who was ***"caught up unto God, and to his throne."*** (Revelation 12:5) and then there was ***"the remnant of [the woman's] seed"*** against whom the ***"the dragon was wrath ... and went to make war"*** (Revelation 12:17). Those Jews and Gentiles asleep in Christ and resurrected at His second coming (i.e., the ***"man child"***) are distinguished from the 144,000 Jews who were ***"the remnant of her seed"*** who had to deal with a raging, earth-bound Satan and his Antichrist and False Prophet beasts under the Great Tribulation.

I am hopeful that the Lord will bless this little body with the opportunity to take a deep dive into chapter 20-22 of Revelation, related to the post-millennial events. Because, there is a lot of wonderful stuff in those chapters. Until then, however, I want to state plainly that we have a very

clearly stated distinction between what happens with the righteous Jews who are redeemed under the sixth seal – together with their progeny – and what happens with the righteous Jews who lived and died before the second coming of Christ. That is a distinction that the angel Gabriel is helping Daniel to see in this opening oracle of chapter 12.

The third grouping identified by Gabriel opens up a most beautiful collection of Hebrew words. Simultaneously, I am utterly stunned at the choice of English words offered to us in this translation. They are not wrong. They are shockingly misdirecting. The mental gymnastics I experienced – adjusting from the words used to the actual meaning of the expression – are significant. Here is the passage:

“And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.” (Daniel 12:3)

I challenge all of you. Does this not generate images of effulgent, floating spirits that radiate light upon all who witness them? The perfectly practical description that the Hebrew words provide is comforting ... but not the imagery these English words produce.

- ***“And they that be wise”*** = teachers of God’s truth.
- ***“Shall shine”*** = Warn, teach, admonish
- ***“As the brightness”*** = With pure light – as in ***“Ye are the light of the world.”*** (Matthew 5:14)
- ***“Of the firmament”*** = Everywhere – as in ***“For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.”*** (Habakkuk 2:14)
- ***“And they that turn many”*** = Hebrew is *“rab”*, a contraction of Rabbi or teacher
- ***“To righteousness”*** = Practical spiritual living – as in ***“Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts”*** (Zechariah 14:21)
- ***“[Shall shine] as the stars”*** = Be a reflection of the Messiah
- ***“For ever and ever”*** = Redundant expression of eternal perpetuity

This is the description Gabriel gives to Daniel for what I have discretely named the third grouping of Jews. I referenced a passage previously, out of Revelation 20, where I was giving the scriptural authority for the proposition that there are some among the 144,000 redeemed of Israel who are killed during venomous assault by the final Antichrist against Jewry. Within that passage, there are three references that fit with this grouping: ***“they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years”***, ***“they shall be priests of God and of Christ”***, and ***“shall reign with him a thousand years.”*** A distinction is made between those graceless Jews who are mercilessly slaughtered by Antichrist and those who live through that period (and apparently some die) who are resurrected to life in the earth, and carry on with Christ in His millennial kingdom. The language contained in many passages of Scripture demand this much. The level of detail may one day be better discerned by those beloved in this house, for which we will give thanks to our God, but we have attained to this knowledge.

It bears noting that the description given of the duties these Jews are joyfully assigned, during this earthly reign of Jesus Christ, bears a perfect resemblance to the duties of God's prophets and preachers in every dispensation of time. When a soul is brought to the work of being an elder of one of God's little flock – a New Testament Church body – these exact same bullet-pointed things are required of that soul. It is a perfect pattern throughout the history of humanity. We are to spiritually discern and rightly divide the Word of truth in the practical application of His commandments and laws and ordinances to the daily lives and afflictions and trials of His people. That is being His servant. I'm going to close this sermon with a perfect example of how this is supposed to be.

The bully enforcer for the Jewish High Priest, named Malchus, got his ear lopped off. It's a thing that gets not a little attention, and not a little deception, applied to it. Here is the relevant passage:

“¶ When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples. And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples. Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground. Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none. Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?” (John 18:1-11)

A companion passage from Luke adds another relevant component to this amazing historical event, to wit: ***“And [Jesus] touched his ear, and healed him.” (Luke 22:51)*** So, considering the duty we have, as simply outlined by Gabriel's words to Daniel, what do we properly make of this, when it comes to rightly dividing the Word of truth in the practical daily lives of the saints?

The low hanging fruit would include that we have no duty or responsibility to get into physical warfare with the men of this earth. Because ***“the weapons of our warfare are not carnal” (2 Corinthians 10:4)***, and we are instructed to ***“avenge not [yourselves]” (Romans 12:19)*** or even render ***“evil for evil, or railing for railing” (1 Peter 3:9)***, but rather ***“unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other” (Luke 6:29)***. There's danger in our handling of the words here, because if you watch the way the world treats these words, they quickly exchange the physical violence and railing screeds for simply preaching and steadfastly maintaining gospel truth. Thereby, they desire to make us ***“ashamed of the testimony of our Lord” (2 Timothy 1:8)***.

There is a beautiful thing being represented in this passage, and while we can carefully take the good of these lessons about our zeal turning into human-focused and willful aggression, I want to shift this over to beholding the amazing wisdom and glory of God and Christ Jesus in the weaving of providence to declare and prophecy of His eternal purpose in election and reprobation. What was here removed ... and then restored?

“The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies. Their poison is like the poison of a serpent: they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear;” (Psalms 58:3-4)

When the Levitical priesthood – a type of Jesus Christ the **“great high priest” (Hebrews 4:14)** – was established, the blood of the ram was put upon **“the tip of the right ear of Aaron, and upon the tip of the right ear of his sons” (Exodus 29:20)** to consecrate them to the work. Consider this. The mechanism whereby the servant of God will receive instruction and do the will of Him who sent him, is the right ear. That consecrated ear – in the symbol – cannot hear when it is lopped off!

“Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not ... make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.” (Isaiah 6:9-10)

The time came for the ear of the servant of the high priest to be cut off. There was a time for the Word of God to no longer be received by the Jewish people. **“Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.” (Matthew 23:38)** This is a beautiful display of how the willfulness of man results in being separated from hearing God’s word. The Jewish race turned into a will-worshipping, man-focused collection of traditions, and the result was loss of spiritual hearing. But the event teaches us yet more.

By what power is that hearing restored? By what power does the servant of the High Priest – those unto whom **“were committed the oracles of God” (Romans 3:2)?** – receive again the gift of hearing? Jesus Christ declares, upon his telling the Jews that their house was desolate, what would be the conditions under which they would again have His presence:

“For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.” (Matthew 23:39)

Indeed! And by what power will the hearing be restored? The touching of Christ restoring the ear of Malchus is not just about a cutesy miracle to get Peter out of trouble with the authorities. Read the prophecy of Zechariah:

“¶ Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH. For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the

graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.” (Zechariah 3:8-9)

The power of Jesus Christ – the **“BRANCH”** – will return the hearing of the Jewish people at the appointed hour. This is the primary lesson of the removal and restoring of Malchus’ ear, to which I believe all other treatments of the passage must take the role of second fiddle. This is the beautiful thread that runs through so much of scripture. It remains the blessed duty and privilege of elders to continuously remind their flock that we must see the fidelity of God in the fulfillment of His promise to the seed of Abraham – shoring up the promises poured out upon those who have been grafted into that blessed Olive Tree.

The redeemed of the Jewish remnant ... those who were sealed under the sixth seal, travel with the Gentile saints until Christ’s return, witness the horrendous onslaught of Antichrist that results in the complete removal of the Jewish people from the earth except themselves (some dying therein), and were then resurrected to human life as Christ sets His earthly throne ... will dwell with Christ and be His teachers of God’s commandments to the whole of the earth. They will evidently be in that happy role for eternity. I believe there is much more to be understood about this. Certainly, there appears to be a degree to which this knowledge will be part of what is revealed as those days come upon the Gentile and Jewish saints in the Day of the Lord.

When I return to Daniel’s final vision, it will be time – God willing – to take a disciplined view of that passage that we use so much in this body. It deserves a proper eschatological examination – particularly as it pertains to the subject of the restored of Israel and the application of the Day of the Lord to that privileged and humbled assembly.

“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)

I love you all. Amen.