

Daniel 06-06-18a

This is the 18th of June, 2006, Father's Day for this year. Happy Father's Day to all of us who are fathers and glad to be so. And we continue this morning, our study in the book of Daniel, the very end of chapter 12, which has little to nothing to do with fathers and Father's Day.

And I'm sorry to disappoint you. We're not going to have a Father's Day special. We're just going to continue on because we have the opportunity this morning to summarize and conclude our study of this great prophetic book.

Let's take a moment as we approach the study of God's word to clear our minds and prepare our hearts, lay aside distractions and the things that can prevent God's Holy Spirit from ministering this truth to our souls. Shall we pray? Father, it is a great privilege for us to be granted access into heavenly truths through the study of your word. It is a wonderful privilege to receive the ministry of your spirit, to have his presence and his seal upon us throughout our lives.

It is a privilege to look at the truth in your word, the very thinking of the Lord Jesus Christ who embodies all of the fullness of your essence in bodily form, who communicates to us through his life and through his example in ways that even the Old Testament could not fully reveal. We thank you for the assembly of believers of which we are a part. We thank you for our families and our fellowship together that we receive encouragement, we receive blessing, we receive the function of the spiritual gifts that you have distributed amongst us every time we gather together and spend time in fellowship centered on your word and on the ministry of your spirit.

We thank you for the nation in which we live that grants us this opportunity in freedom and in privacy without fear of persecution or harassment. We thank you for those who are defending and protecting our national interests abroad. We thank you for the leadership of our nation.

We thank you that we have a strong Christian as a president and that many of those in his cabinet and staff are likewise believers who are seeking to please you in the fulfillment of their duties and we ask a special blessing on them. As you well know, Father, they face great opposition attacks on every side and yet we receive the benefits of their steadfast pursuit of objectives which are difficult for many to understand. And we pray a special blessing on those who can't assemble and hear the teaching of your word this morning that you will refresh and renew the truths that are already familiar to them, that they will receive it as a blessing and as a comfort and encouragement on this day, wherever they may be and whatever the pressures and demands on them may be.

And we ask the same blessing on ourselves that the portion of your word we study this morning will unite with what we have learned in the past and give us a fresh perspective and a fresh insight into our place in your plan so that we can live our lives in a way that is pleasing in your sight and glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. We ask all these things in his name. Amen.

Our study of this book began with a teenager who was taken out of his life, out of his hometown, away from his family, away from his prospects and his future. He had everything to look forward to. He was one of the bright young lights from a noble family in Jerusalem, and he was suddenly taken captive.

All of his future hopes and dreams annihilated as he was dragged ignominiously away from everything that he had grown up expecting and knowing to a foreign land. He was placed in a training program that was designed to brainwash away the training of his youth, brainwash away his religious heritage and replace it with a foreign system, a different idea. He was looked at, he was viewed by the Babylonians as raw material, as someone who was intellectually capable, who had already received a great deal of education that could be subverted for a new purpose.

This is not unlike what we as believers face in our culture today. Now we're not teenagers and we don't have the same kinds of prospects that Daniel and his three companions had, but we are constantly bombarded. We are barraged.

We are beset and there is an effort to subvert us and to take our expectations, to take our understandings and pervert them and subvert them and send them in a different direction. This has ever been the satanic program. The book of Daniel as with the book of Ezekiel, as with the book of Revelation, as with the first few chapters of Genesis is a record.

It is a detailing of the strategy of Satan to take the people of God and divert them, distract them, send them in a different direction. And as we study the career of Daniel and his companions, as we see the unfolding of the prophetic word talking about Satan's future program, whether it is near fulfillment in Antiochus and in the kingdoms that rise and fall subsequent to the Babylonians or in its ultimate fulfillment, which all of those foreshadow in the 70th week of Daniel in the tribulation period just prior to the return of the Lord Jesus all the way through. And we have seen this in our Ezekiel study.

We've seen it in our revelation study. We've seen it throughout this book of Daniel. Satan, while he has many different areas of history where he appears and where he tries to make key changes and key attacks on the people of God, his strategy is very consistent, almost predictable.

It is to take truth and color it, take truth and leaven it, take truth and amalgamate it, produce a syncretistic mixture that has enough truth in it to be able to palatable and to pass the test of the unwary. It's kind of like when they sugar coat medicine for little children. There is a bitter pill inside, but we put some sugar on the outside to fool the palate of those who would never take a bitter pill.

So Satan knows that most believers are not going to fall for blatant outright evil. So it has to be wrapped in the flag of righteousness. It has to appear to be coming from an angel of light.

And this is ever the pattern. So Daniel had plenty of reasons, as did his companions, to rationalize and say, well, God can't really expect me to be faithful in this situation. The law of Moses never anticipated this sort of circumstance.

And many people today like to say, well, you know, the Bible was written yesterday. In a particular cultural time, it didn't anticipate the kind of pressures and the kind of circumstances that we face today. The Bible doesn't know of drug addiction.

The Bible doesn't know of abortion. The Bible doesn't know of teen pregnancy. The Bible doesn't know of the horrible pressures that face young people in the world today that they used to, you know, years ago when I was a youth, they would say, Oh, the threat of nuclear Holocaust.

They don't talk about that so much with the fall of the Soviet Union. But many of us can remember when from many a pulpit and many a book and many a diatribe was launched forth saying, Oh, you know, young people today are just living under this horrible oppressive fear of nuclear annihilation. Well, if it's not one fear, it's another.

If it's not one pressure, it's another. It has always from ancient times been that Satan launches a program against the people of God. Now, what happens to the rest of the people in the world and their fears and the slings and arrows of their outrageous fortune doesn't really concern me.

God has made provision. God has made a way of blessing for those who turn to him. And if someone doesn't turn to him, I say they're on their own.

But for us, we have a recourse. He who dwells in the secret place of the most high, Psalm 91 shall abide in the shadow of the almighty. God is our refuge.

God is our fortress. God is our rock. We put our trust in him and these storms and pressures and adversities need not stop us or divert us.

Daniel and his three friends are typical in the literary sense of that word. They provide a type of the unexpected and very greatly disturbing sorts of challenges that can face anyone who belongs to the people of God, past, present or future. And it is our response in those circumstances that defines who we are in God's plan.

We are believers. We are going to be gathered to Christ at his return. But then what? Are we going to be overcomers? Will we walk with him in white? Will we have a white stone with a new name? Will we partake of the hidden manna? Will we not be hurt by the second death? Will we have the order of the morning star, that special award? Do we maintain our hope and our confident expectation of his return? He who comes to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him.

It doesn't say diligently seek him when times are good. It doesn't say those who diligently seek

him as long as there's not something that really distracts them. It's our calling to diligently seek God no matter what.

And the greater the opposition, the sweeter the victory and the more profound our understanding of God and his purpose and his plan and the more prepared and equipped we are going to be for God's future plan. So we have seen the career of Daniel beginning in his teenage years and moving forward through the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon and then coming forward when the Babylonians are supplanted, are defeated, Belshazzar and the writing on the wall and the defeat of the Babylonians by the Medo-Persian empire. And Daniel survives that great sea change and God preserves him.

And he's once again a functionary in the government and you come all the way down. And now by the time we get to chapter 10, 11 and 12 of Daniel, we are clear down into the reign of Cyrus. This is the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia that this final message comes to Daniel.

This is approximately the year 536 BC. This is 70 years after 606. It's 67 years after 603 which is remember 605 and 606 the first incursions of Nebuchadnezzar down into Jerusalem and the first wave of captives are taken back to Babylon.

Daniel has been away from his land for approximately 70 years. And you remember the prophecy of Jeremiah that said that the land would gain its Sabbaths and that this captivity would last for 70 years. Well, the first incursion occurs in 605 606 down to 603 in that timeframe.

And there was a sort of partial obedience and kind of a lackluster kind of uneasy truce thing. But Nebuchadnezzar finally has to go back down in 586 and destroy the temple and raise Jerusalem to the ground to fulfill all of those dire prophecies that Ezekiel acted out with the sword and with the fire, with the clay model of Jerusalem and so on. So from 586 the final destruction of the temple, when is the time of the return? When is the time when people can begin to rebuild and restore Jerusalem as the books of Ezra and Nehemiah detail? Well, it's going to be 517 516 that timeframe.

So this is still 20 years out. We're at 536 so depending on where that 70 year clock starts, if it starts from the first captivity in 605 606 down to 603, then Daniel is right on the cusp of the end of the 70 years. If it is figured from the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple in 586, then the 70 years will run out in 516.

But Daniel receives this last message from Gabriel, the prophecies concerning Persia and Greece. We've looked at them in detail and we've seen how these eventually foretell the literal career of Antiochus Epiphanes, who sets up the abomination of desolation. We saw this first way back in Daniel chapter eight and we have it detailed again in chapter 11 and then at the end of chapter 11, this sort of lifts up and departs from Antiochus and refers more generally and more substantially to that greater abomination, that greater desolator who is going to come in the end times.

So then in chapter 12 we saw Gabriel say, at that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered. Everyone who is found written in the book.

This is the book of your people. This is the book of those who will be delivered from what? Delivered from what? Delivered from the power of this great foe who is the personage that Antiochus and the Antichrist represent. Who are they the agent for? It's Satan himself and he is the manifestation.

He is the prince of the power of the air. He by promoting sin and evil promotes the power of death. And these people of Daniel are going to be delivered from death.

Paul says the power of sin is death. Oh death, where is your sting? Oh grave, where is your victory? The sting of death is sin and the strength of sin is the law. The law defines sin and defines its penalty, which is death.

And there are different kinds of death. There's the death of separation from people, of ostracism from the camp, outside the camp, the living death of leprosy. Those people have to stay outside the camp.

They cannot approach. There is the ultimate penalty of death for sin, which was paid by Christ at the cross. But these people nevertheless are subject to physical death.

The Old Testament saints all died, tells us in Hebrews, all these died in faith, not having received the promise. They will be delivered from that death. They are all written in God's book.

Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. Now when it says everlasting shame, everlasting contempt, what's it talking about? This resurrection and we've, this is review. We've covered this, this resurrection of the Old Testament saints of the Old Testament believers brings them back for the fulfillment of God's earthly covenant promises in an earthly literal 1000 year kingdom presided over by the Lord Jesus Christ.

He will rule with a rod of iron. The rod of iron is David. David will sit on his throne in Jerusalem, David and his sons.

And this is going to be the administration of the kingdom. It is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. The earthly agent of that kingdom is going to be the fallen tent of David that is restored and raised back up.

And this shame and everlasting contempt for Old Testament saints, this everlasting is talking about the length of the kingdom. It doesn't mean into the indefinite eternal future per se. They have the opportunity in the millennial kingdom to demonstrate whether they are going to pursue righteousness, whether they're going to bear fruit of righteousness to God or not.

And this will culminate at the end of the kingdom and the sheep and goats judgment. Matthew 24, those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the firmament and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever. Those who are wise, those who pursue righteousness, those who teach righteousness in the millennial kingdom are going to go on into the kingdom of the father.

Jesus talks about this specifically. He says they will shine like stars in the kingdom of the father. So those who have been wise are going to be wise in the kingdom.

Those who learn to be wise are going to be wise and turn others to that wisdom and that righteousness. They will shine like the brightness of the firmament. Then he says in verse four, but you Daniel shut up the words and seal the book until the time of the end.

Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall increase. There is going to be a lot of activity. There is going to be a lot of gesturing.

There's going to be a lot of traffic, lots of activity and people are going to learn more and more. But this book is to remain completed and sealed. No more additions to it until the time of the end.

Why does he get this notation in verse four? We don't have this at the end of Ezekiel. We don't have it at the end of Hosea or Joel or virtually any of the other prophets that you want to name, but he's specifically told to shut up and seal this book until the time of the end. Why? What are these chapters detailed for us? The specifics of that portion of the age of Israel that comes after Messiah is cut off.

We have a lot of information in Ezekiel. We have a lot of information in other parts of the Bible about the age of Israel, about the policies of Satan, about the time of the end. But Daniel's book time and again, this prophecy, this message is directed to your people.

It's specifically for Israel when the church leaves at the rapture and boy, if you don't think there's not a lot of attacks on the doctrine of the rapture and the understanding of dispensations in this day and age, watch your National Geographic channel. For some reason, National Geographic instead of going over and figuring out what the aborigines are doing in far off lands or sponsoring Jacques Cousteau's sons in submarines and so on. Now the National Geographic is sponsoring all of these specials on the Bible.

And I watched two in a row the other night, one on the book of Exodus, which is a book we've recently studied and completed. And the other was on the book of Revelation, which we have recently studied and completed. And the satanic presentation of information in those specials is a wonder to behold under the guise of objectivity, under the guise of science in a very non-threatening and sort of friendly way that is seeming to give full due to those who respect the Bible and interviewing Bible scholars and so on.

This is woven together and you have to really have your ears on to catch the distortions and to

catch the fallacies where over and over again it says, fundamentalist Christians believe A, scholarship believes B. And the implied message here is the uneducated, the benighted fools who believe the mythology of the Bible claim that there really was an Exodus under Moses, but scholarship has gone to the desert and can't find any remnants of their camps, can't find any evidence whatsoever. There's no archeological evidence at all that the Israelites were ever in the wilderness. In fact, there's no archeological evidence that the Israelites were ever in Egypt.

In any numbers that they did not dwell in Goshen and become so numerous that the Egyptians were afraid of them as it says in the first several chapters of Exodus, that this was a story that was, then some scholar will come on and they always put their qualifications down below. Here's, you know, Fred Mertz, the chairman of the department of religion at some unknown college on the East Coast. And he pontificates on how well, you know, in the captivity, they were facing problems at the time and they needed some encouragement and they needed a sense of identity.

They needed something to unify them as they tried to come out from under these captivities. And so creative scholars and writers made up a history that would unite and motivate and inspire the Jews with a sense of national identity. And so this legendary Genesis of their nation was concocted.

Now I don't know about you, but it seems to me that history is a record of how smart the Jews are. What kind of a dumb generation of Jews would fall for a fairy tale of their national origin when the Jews have never been that dumb at any other time in history? Where has anybody ever put over a falsehood on the Jews that they are renowned for their cleverness and their insight and their grasp on reality and how they can use that to advance themselves financially and so on. And yet apparently there was a several generations of just completely clueless Jews who read a Grimm's fairy tale version of their national origin and said, Oh yeah, yeah, that's what happened.

Yes. We were a mighty nation and you know, Joseph has swallowed this hook line and sink it's on. This is what these programs put forward.

And then of course when you get to the book of Revelation, well there's this sort of condescending head shaking and eyebrow raising that, well you know, there are some fundamentalist Christians who actually think the apostle John wrote that book. And they actually take literally that there will be an apocalyptic end of time and they show all these mushroom cloud things and then they say, you know, this type of literature, apocalyptic literature was popular in the first century just as it was in the preceding century, the last century BC. Of course they don't say BC, they say BCE and CE.

They don't want to say before Christ and Anno Domini, year of our Lord. So they have a scholarly designation and you'll see this when you read articles, it'll be BCE before the common era and then CE, the common era so that it's not offensive because Jewish scholars don't want to say BC. They don't acknowledge Christ anyway.

So there is this idea that well, apocalyptic literature and so people in the first century AD were wanting to write a commentary about politics and the movement of history as it existed in their day. So some guy calling himself John wrote this apocalypse and apocalypse means revealing or pulling aside of the curtain to show reality. And so he wrote this highly allegorical and symbolic account of what was currently going on.

Well, I find this amusing because modern scholarship likes to say that the book of revelation is very late, that it was written after the destruction of the temple in 70 AD and that was written, you know, possibly even in the one hundreds, you know, one 20 something like that AD. And yet they also turn around and say, well, 666 is the number of the beast. And 666, if you do this complex retroversion works out to be Nero Caesar.

Do you remember the time when Nero was the emperor of Rome? It's the late fifties and early sixties AD. So you can't have it both ways. If the guy is saying the number of the beast and the Antichrist is 666 and it's Nero Caesar, well that means that the book had to have been written back in the fifties or at the latest, the early sixties AD, which puts it 10 to 15 years before the fall of Jerusalem.

But of course they don't see that as an inconsistency, but here's the point. There are satanic attacks trying to erode the foundation and undermine the basis for faith in God, Christian faith in this age. It's everywhere.

Archeology disputes the claims of the Bible. Science with its evolutionary interpretation of the fossil evidence disputes and undermines and pooh-poohs the Bible so much so that there's this popular thing that they call the God of the gaps. God exists in the gaps that science cannot fill.

And as science expands and explains more and more things, God is relegated to the gaps. Well, used to be nobody knew how life came. So God filled that gap.

God created biological life in six days, 6,000 years ago. Well, then Darwin came along and science figured out evolution. And so now, okay, well it must have been theistic evolution.

God just started life in progress and then evolution took over and that's where life came from. So now God is just in the gap of how life arose because science still can't explain biogenesis. How did life appear from non-life? And science still can't explain a few things.

And so some believers fall for this and they say, well, sure, you know, theistic evolution, God caused it to happen. And we just put God anywhere that science can't explain something. Well, it's a satanic attack and more and more people fall for it.

And more and more people claim to be Christians and they are not. They claim to be Christian, but they deny the deity of Christ. They claim to be Christian, but they deny the inspiration of scripture.

They claim to be Christians, but they deny the infallibility of scripture. Well, it's a witness to the

truth, but it's full of mistakes and so on. Well, this is what is covered in many will run to and fro and knowledge will increase.

Knowledge isn't necessarily wisdom, but knowledge will increase. And we have in the same way that the satanic attacks have escalated over the last two or 3000 years, we also have the advance in understanding of the word of God, especially in the last hundred to 150 years, we have found manuscript evidence. We have been able to put together, uh, things looking at the word of God.

People say, Oh, dispensations were created by John Darby 150 years ago. Nobody knew anything about dispensations until the 1830s or forties when John N Darby, uh, invented dispensations. And then it was taken over by Schofield and Chafer at Dallas seminary.

And that's the only reason anybody believes in dispensations today. And it is utter nonsense. I can show you church fathers going all the way back to the time of Irenaeus and Papias, uh, who understood dispensations, who understood the ages and the plan and purpose of God, who understood the difference between Israel and the church.

But we have had advances in knowledge and we do know more. Now we know more details. We have the ability to, uh, have a finer resolution in our view of the word of God than ever before.

So knowledge has increased. Then I, Daniel looked in verse five and there stood two others, one on this river bank and the other on that river bank. One said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, by the way, a lot of interpreters think the man clothed in linen with the gold belt, gold of Uthaz and all that.

They think it's Christ. It's not. It is not the Lord Jesus Christ.

He is dressed similarly. They say, Oh, look at revelation chapter one. This is Christ.

The gold, the white linen, all of the creatures close to God are clothed in white linen. All of them are reflective of his glory. Just because you have one, you don't have to mash them all together and make them Jesus.

You don't have to see in the old Testament, uh, the pre incarnate Christ because Paul, the apostle and the book of Hebrews tell us that Christ was not revealed in many parts. And in many ways, God spoke in times past, but in these latter days, he speaks to us by the son. Now, if the son spoke in the book of Daniel, then the first chapter of Hebrews is off the mark, but Jesus Christ is not revealed until his birth.

And the angel of the Lord is not Jesus Christ. The man holding the sword that Joshua met is not Jesus Christ. The individual that Jacob wrestled with on the far side of the river is not Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ did not appear, does not appear in anything other than type in prospect. When you

look at the tabernacle furniture, when you look at the, uh, predictive elements that look forward to the Messiah, the suffering servant of Isaiah and so on, he is predicted, but he does not walk around. He doesn't speak.

He doesn't appear in visions. He is not revealed until he becomes incarnate. And this is just a mashing together.

Just like in the new Testament, they want to mash together all believers into the overcomers. They want to mash together all old Testament messengers or many of them into the Lord Jesus. And it's not.

So the one clothed in linen above the waters of the river, how long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be? I heard the man clothed in linen who was above the waters of the river, hold up his right hand, his left hand to heaven and swear by him who lives forever. It will be a time, times and half a time. When they hand of the holy people has been crushed.

These things shall be finished. We talked about this last time. Daniel naturally in verse eight says, although I heard, I did not understand.

So he says, my Lord, what the end of these? What's the end of these things? He said, go Daniel for the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end. Many shall be purified, made white and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly. And this is a reminder of the fact that when the message of Daniel, like the rest of scripture is revealed when it is the issue, one of two things is going to happen.

This is true of all scripture. All scripture is God breathed. All scripture is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and destruction and righteousness, right? But many people hear scripture and it doesn't reprove and it doesn't rebuke and it doesn't correct.

And it doesn't instruct in righteousness. Why people who have decided to reject it are going to pursue wickedness. And the word of God is not a magic wand that touches frogs and turns them into princes.

If you think like a frog and decide like a frog, you're going to remain a frog and the wicked are going to remain wicked, even though God has revealed the truth of his plan. But there are others who will be purified. Now all of this is of a piece.

Go back to chapter 12 verse two. Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. This is referring back to the same thing.

The angel speaks to Daniel and says, go your way. What I already told you is going to happen. There are some who are going to rise to a resurrection of shining and brightness like the stars forever and ever and others.

It's going to be shameful and full of contempt. This prophecy is going to go out there and people are going to look at it as with the rest of scripture and either be made wise, purify themselves or they're going to remain wicked. There is sufficient revelation in this book to decide it.

So the question becomes, what is it about the book of Daniel that creates this division? What is the reaction or the response? What would you say if we closed our books and I handed out a little sheet of paper and said, all right, pop quiz, what is the theme of the book of Daniel? What is the theme of the book of Daniel? What would you say? Give you a second to ponder that you think about all of the chapters, chapters one through six, all the story of Daniel, his friends and being ripped out from their homeland and taken to Babylon. And then the sequence of visions, the experience of Nebuchadnezzar and then all of these things about the end times. What is the overarching impression that is left after you read this book, the 12 chapters? I can give it to you in three words.

God controls history. They tried to take Daniel and his friends and turn them into something, but God controls history. And those who are faithful to God are a part of that positive eruption of God into human history.

God's positive impact on human history. We can either be the hammer or we can be the stuff that is crushed under the hammer. God controls history.

Many shall be purified, made white and refined things that are purified and made white and refined. And guess what? What happens to them? Think about the construction of the tabernacle. What's it made of? Things that are purified, things that are white, things that are refined, gold beaten fine, white linen, purified materials, sanctified materials.

The people who worked on that endeavor were filled with the Holy Spirit, Bezalel and the Holy Ab and all those others who were motivated to give and motivated to participate. When we look at the major issue of the book of Daniel, God controls history. That includes this history.

That includes your life and my life, the circumstances, everything from the appliances that break or the relationships that break, the people that come in and out of our lives, there are financial ups and downs, our business successes and failures, our social successes and failures, our own failures and our own recovery. All of that is history and God is in control of history. Within the framework that God has constructed, there is room for movement.

It reminds me, and I don't mean this to be denigrating, but scientists do experiments with laboratory mice and laboratory rats. What do they do? They construct an environment and it's got walls. You think about the maze and how fast can you negotiate the maze and find the cheese at the end of the tunnel? They time them and so on.

Can they learn the maze if you put them in the same one over and over? Do they get faster? Do they learn the turns and remember them? Well, there is room for choice, but it is confined

within the limits that have been set by the construction of the scientists. And that's exactly what human history is. God constructs the parameters.

God sets the boundaries beyond which people cannot go. And he defines the freedom within which people can operate. So if someone is doing evil, if someone is taking us captive, if someone is attacking us, as the Babylonians did Jerusalem and the noble families, Daniel and his companions, God has allowed it.

Job in the land of Uz, losing the camels, losing the oxen, ultimately losing his sons and daughters, losing his health, losing the esteem of his closest friends, having to listen to them carp at him for 30 chapters. God set those parameters. God allowed those things to happen.

God controls history. God controls our lives. So we should not be dismayed and we should not be discouraged.

Many are going to run to and fro. We get more experience. We get more knowledge the longer we live.

But that knowledge and that effort is not a substitute for recognizing the overarching divine control of our lives. We are going to purify ourselves and we are either going to purify ourselves, make ourselves white, sanctify ourselves, refine ourselves in this process. What does it say in the New Testament? Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you in due time.

This is a process of refinement. This is a process of growth. Don't be conformed to the world.

Be transformed by the renewing of your minds. Many will be purified, white, refined, but the wicked are going to do wickedly. The goats are going to be goats and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.

Knowledge increases, but do you understand the knowledge? Knowledge increases, but do you make use of the knowledge to refine and purify and sanctify the soul? This is the question. This is what we should ask ourselves day by day. It's great to look at it here in Daniel.

It's great to think about it as an abstract concept, but when we fold our Bibles and notebooks up and leave and go back to living our lives, you know, this is the halfway point of the summer already. I think today this is like the halfway mark where the summer is halfway over. Life is marching on and the older you get, the faster it goes.

What are we going to do with the rest of the summer? What are we going to do with the rest of this day? What are we going to do with the rest of our lives? There is a choice. There is a judgment. We are either going to have everlasting life, shining like the sun, brightness of the firmament, stars forever and ever, or shame and contempt.

Knowledge increases. We study the Word of God. We learn more and more.

Every new book that we look at, every new passage we look at, our knowledge increases, but knowledge increase is not the goal, is it? Increasing knowledge is not the goal. God controls history. What is the goal? In this space and time that He has allocated to us, this little short time on earth, purification, refinement.

What do we do with the knowledge? Do we become wise? Are we purified and sanctified? It ought to make a difference. It made a difference for Daniel. It put him in some of the worst circumstances.

I mean, made a eunuch. I can't even imagine being ripped out of his whole society culture, all of his future. But his knowledge became wisdom, and Daniel purified himself and sanctified himself.

He's listed among the three wisest men of all time. He converted his experience and his life under the control of God into wisdom and purification and sanctification. Daniel is going to shine like the stars in the kingdom of the Father.

The wicked are going to continue to do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand. The wise shall understand. That's why this is put at the end of the book.

What should we remember out of these 12 chapters? The wise need to understand. We have to meditate on God's word and understand its application to our life. God controls history.

Nothing comes into our life that God did not foresee and plan for and allow for and provide for. Do we look at it in that light? Do we purify and sanctify ourselves or not? Now, we have this final section, these final three verses. From the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be this period of time.

Blessed is he who waits and comes to the end of a longer period of time. Go your way till the end. You shall rest.

You will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days. Well, this is the final section of the book, and we'll take our break. We'll come back and address these final three verses and conclude our study of this great book of Daniel.