

Hurst Green

29th Jul 2018

Daniel 11:36-12:13

Daniel's vision of the end times

.And so we come to the last of our journey through Daniel and, appropriately, the section is the end times.

After this I can escape from your favourite book into something a little more straightforward!

Do not forget what the angel told Daniel

Daniel 12:4 (ANIV)

⁴ but you, Daniel, close up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge."

It is there in the bible and so must be useful for teaching etc. but we are warned to seal it up because many will seek to increase knowledge.

For me that is the classic warning – we could spend our energy and time seeking after this understanding as Daniel has done in his old age or we can spend it being Christians in this world around us.

Do not forget two things that we can learn from Daniel and I hope you have picked them up already as we have worked out way through this series.

Like Daniel we are spending our lives as believers but living in a pagan land, a pagan culture that does not understand us or seek to understand us.

Like Daniel we need to remember to stand – even when it seems risky because our God is able to save and even if he doesn't he is still our God.

And Daniels God is our God – he is still on the throne and will remain there. He is in charge – in charge of the nations and in charge of individuals he puts who he will in charge when he wants to.

And of course his ways are better than ours and his plans are better than ours. He is in charge of the hour of our birth and the hour of our death and all that goes on in-between. Do you remember that song the young people did some years ago – God of the big and God of the small and God of the stuff somewhere in the middle (Doug Horley)

And that is really what this whole end times prophecy is all about – it is hidden in good prophecy words and strange measures of time but God is saying to Daniel that he is in charge.

God knows his people and will deliver them and those who choose not to be his people will continue in their wicked ways.

So that you do not have to doubt let me show you in the chapter where it says that.

Daniel 12:1 (ANIV)

¹“At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a

~~time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered.~~

So to be delivered you have to be in the book and how do you get into the book? You put on the helmet of salvation from which follows so much of the armour of God but most importantly you become righteous and effective because the prayers of the righteous are effective.

It does not matter if you have already faced the first death

Daniel 12:2 (ANIV)

² *Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.*

All the saints shall be united at that time

Daniel 12:10 (ANIV)

¹⁰ *Many will be purified, made spotless and refined, but the wicked will continue to be wicked. None of the wicked will understand, but those who are wise will understand.*

Then we hit the funny timings – time, times and half a time and measurements in days. You can spend a lot of time worrying about those and I would say it would be too no end. You need to hold onto the final verse

Daniel 12:13 (ANIV)

¹³ *“As for you, go your way till the end. You will rest, and then at the end of the days you will rise to receive your allotted inheritance.”*

Your God is big enough to do the things he has promised and the things he has promised are amazing – but true.

But think on that final verse in Daniel.

Daniel has been seeking understanding and has been told all sorts of things about Kings who will reign and some lovely detail as we looked at last week.

But Daniel who was highly esteemed and had been sent mighty angels to answer his desire to understand more.

Now we come to the end times and God has to choose what to tell Daniel. There must be so much that could be said – so much that could be understood and yet what is it that God wants Daniel to understand?

- If your name is in the book of life you will be delivered.(verse 1)
- Those who have died will awake to everlasting life or eternal shame (verse 2)

And when Daniel asks what the outcome of all this will be he is given his final verse

Daniel 12:13 (ANIV)

¹³ *“As for you, go your way till the end. You will rest, and then at the end of the days you will rise to receive your allotted inheritance.”*

This is the most important thing about the end times – God wants Daniel to know and God wants you to know

You will receive your inheritance – that hope, that treasure laid up in heaven for us.

So what has Daniel shown us?

God doing some amazing things – God showing his power convincing heathen Kings, heathen kings who controlled the known world to say that Daniels God is the one true living God.

Things perhaps we are reluctant to say but they wrote as royal decrees and published throughout the world.

He has shown us that he can and does intervene in amazing ways – in ways that are bigger than we would comprehend. If we went into the lion’s den would we expect to come out at dawn? Or would we doubt that our God was able?

We may not be called to stand before Putin or Trump but we are all called to stand in front of our friends and neighbours.

We are called to tell them of the hope we have – the hope for eternity and the hope for now. To give them the chance to join us – not once but many times for we do not know when they would join us.

I do not know all your stories but most of us are here because someone invited us along at some point. It may have been the diligence of a parent or some other authority figure, perhaps a friend and it may have been to an ordinary day or a special one that made an impact. We need to continue the action – how much do we value our friends? Enough to want to see them in eternity?

Daniel tells us they need to be in book and we know there is only one way into the book – accepting Christ’s invitation.

Let me finish with

Romans 15:4 (ANIV)

⁴ For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Daniel was written to teach us how to have patient endurance as we live in this pagan land. That we might maintain our hope through the words of scripture and so through the family of God – our friends in this church and the other churches that we share our journey with.