

The Final Instructions of Chapter 12

Hebrew¹

Dan. 12:1 “At that time (וּבְעֵת הַהִיא) (καὶ κατὰ τὴν ὥραν ἐκείνην), Michael, the great prince (הַשָּׂר הַגָּדוֹל) (ὁ ἄγγελος ὁ μέγας) who stands guard over the sons of your people, will stand motionless (וַיַּעֲמֵד) (παρελεύσεται), and there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time (לֹא־נִהְיְתָה כְּמִנְיֹתָיו עַד הַעַתָּה הַהִיא) (ἐκείνη ἡ ἡμέρα θλίψεως, οἷα οὐκ ἐγενήθη ἀφ’ οὗ ἐγενήθησαν ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης). At that time, your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued (וְיִצָּלְתָם) (ὑψωθήσεται).²

Dan. 12:2 “Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life (וְאֵלֶּם לְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם) (οἱ μὲν εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον), but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt (וְאֵלֶּם לְחַרְפָּה לְדָרְאֵן עוֹלָם) (οἱ δὲ εἰς ὀνειδισμόν, οἱ δὲ εἰς διασπορὰν καὶ αἰσχύνην αἰώνιον).³

Dan. 12:3 “Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever (וְלִעֲלָם וָעַד) (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος).⁴

Dan. 12:4 “But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book (וַחֲסֹם וְסַגְּרֵם הַסֵּפֶר) (κάλυψον τὰ προστάγματα καὶ σφράγισαι τὸ βιβλίον) for the sake of the end of time (עַד־עַתָּה קֵץ) (ἕως καιροῦ συντελείας). Many will go back and forth (וַיֵּשְׁבֻּ) (ἀπομανῶσιν), but knowledge will increase.”⁵

¹ Daniel 1:1-2:4 is written in Hebrew, along with 8:1-12:13. The rest of Daniel, 2:5-7:28 is written in Aramaic.

² The man of Daniel 10:5ff is still speaking. He ended chapter 11 with the demise of the Man of Lawlessness in Israel. Now, he comments on the effects that the Man of Lawlessness will have on the Jews (“your [Daniel’s] people] prior to the Messiah’s destroying him. Because Michael will no longer guard the Jews (whatever that means), it will involve a “time of distress” that cannot be compared for the Jews with any other of their experiences in history (not even the Holocaust? Wow).

Cf. Matthew 24:21 – “For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will.” Cf. Isaiah 26:19 – “But your dead will live. Their bodies will rise. You who dwell in the dust, wake up and shout for joy. Your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead.” Nevertheless, authentic believers among the Jews will somehow be spared from the greatness of the tribulation for them.

Nevertheless, the authentic believers among the Jews will escape the cruelty of the Man of Lawlessness. Cf. Revelation 12:14, “But the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.”

³ There will be a general resurrection of the dead that accompanies all these events, with authentic believers being granted eternal life and non-believers to justice and destruction.

⁴ There will be a kind of honor and glory that will be given to authentic believers with their understanding of reality that matches that of the Bible. This will include those who have communicated the truth to unbelievers with the (God-caused, obviously) effect of the latter’s embracing the truth.

⁵ [Expositor’s Bible Commentary – In the ancient Near East, important documents such as contracts, promissory notes, and deeds of conveyance were written out in duplicate. The original document was kept in a secure repository, safe (“closed up”) from later tampering, in order to conserve the interests and rights of all parties to the transaction. Though copies might be made from it, the original was to remain secure so that it might be consulted if any future challenge of its terms were made.]

Because the book of Daniel exists, obviously the man in linen was not commanding Daniel to make sure that what he wrote never saw the light of day and never was made available to others to read in order to learn about all these important ideas. The man in linen wants this information to be made available for the purpose of helping people understand God’s plans and purposes that will culminate in the end of human government that involves anyone else but the Messiah. Combining the evidence in the Hebrew text with the LXX, it would seem that the meaning of the last sentence is that people will be rescued from crazy thinking by the knowledge of Daniel’s book, because it will be a source of truth that properly educates them in regard to the one true God, Yahweh.

Dan. 12:5 Then I, Daniel, looked and behold, two others were standing, one on this bank of the river and the other on that bank of the river.⁶

Dan. 12:6 And one said to the man dressed in linen (לְבוּשׁ הַבְּיָנִים) (τῷ περιβεβλημένῳ τὰ βύσσινα), who was above the waters of the river, “How long will it be until the end of these miraculous acts (עֲדָר־מַתְּיָ קִין הַפְּלִאִוֹת) (πότε οὖν συντέλεια ὧν εἴρηκάς μοι τῶν θαυμαστικῶν καὶ ὁ καθαρισμὸς τούτων)?”⁷

Dan. 12:7 I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, as he raised his right hand and his left toward heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half a time (כִּי לְמוֹעֵד מְדוּעָרִים וְחִצֵּי וּכְכֹלֹת) (ὅτι εἰς καιρὸν καὶ καιροὺς καὶ ἥμισυ καιροῦ). As soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people, all these events will be completed.⁸

Dan. 12:8 As for me, I heard but could not understand. So I said, “My lord, what will be the outcome of these events?”⁹

The Man of Lawlessness of 2 Thessalonians 2
Also called the Son of Destruction
Arises in the Middle East

Future to us

Dan. 12:9 He said, “Go, Daniel, for these words are to be concealed and sealed up (כִּי־תַתְּקַנְיָם וְחִתְּמֵיָם הַדְּבָרִים) (ὅτι κατακεκαλυμμένα καὶ ἐσφραγισμένα τὰ προστάγματα) until the end time (עֲדָר־עֵת קִין) (ἕως ἄν).¹⁰

Dan. 12:10 “Many will be purged, purified, and refined, but the wicked will act wickedly. And none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand.”¹¹

Dan. 12:11 “From the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up (וְלִתְּתָ שֶׁקֶוֶן שְׁגָמָם) (καὶ ἐτοιμασθῆι δοθῆναι τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως), there will be 1,290 days.”¹²

⁶ Two other men besides the man in linen of Daniel 10:5ff. This is still the Tigris River as mentioned in Daniel 10:4.

⁷ One of these other two men addresses the man of Daniel 10:5ff., who has been speaking up to this point. He is asking about the timing of all these events, probably especially those of the Man of Lawlessness and his effects on the Jews that are mentioned last.

⁸ Three and a half years. Cf. Daniel 9:27, where the “tenth horn” is allowed to exercise his cruelty on the Jews for 3½ years, using the same phrase. Then, Revelation 12:14, the only other place where this phrase “for a time, times, and half of time” is used in the Bible, the “woman,” believing Jews, are spirited away on eagle’s wings to be fed in the wilderness away from the serpent.

Here, the man in linen is saying that the “king of the North” at the end of history just before the 2nd coming of the Messiah, i.e., the Man of Lawlessness of 2 Thessalonians 2, turns his attention to the land of Israel and overcomes them for 3½ years. Nevertheless, that will be the extent of his efforts, because the Messiah will destroy him (cf. 2 Thessalonians 1:7,8; 2:1ff.)

⁹ Perhaps because there has been no explicit mention in the explanation of the vision of Daniel 10:1, Daniel feels compelled to ask what is the actual outcome of all that the man in linen has said? He could surmise that the outcome will be the messianic kingdom, but perhaps he wants to make sure.

¹⁰ The first part of the man in linen’s response to Daniel’s question is like that of 12:4, that these are important enough ideas that a secure copy of them must be made.

¹¹ The second part of the man in linen’s response to Daniel’s question is that the world will not get better, especially towards the end. There will always be two different kinds of people in the world—those who act with evil intent towards God, and those who have biblical understanding of the nature of reality and act accordingly.

¹² Three and a half years = 1,278 days. 12 more days = 1,290. While there was a mention in 11:31 of the cessation of temple sacrifices in Jerusalem by Antiochus IV in 168 B.C., the man in linen is now referring to what the Man of Lawlessness will impose on the Jews, basically the same thing. This will last 3½ years + 12 days.

Dan. 12:12 “How blessed is he who keeps waiting and attains to the 1,335 days!”¹³

Dan. 12:13 “But as for you, go your way to the end (וְלָךְ לְלֵךְ הַסֵּף) (καὶ σὺ βάδισον ἀναπαύου). Then, you will enter into rest (נַחְמָה) (καὶ ἀναπαύση) and rise for your allotted portion at the end of the age (וְלָךְ לְלֵךְ הַסֵּף) (εἰς συντέλειαν ἡμερῶν).”¹⁴

¹³ A month and a half = 45 days. Thus 1,290 + 45 = 1,335 days. The man states that the person who perseveres in his belief that the Messiah will come and destroy the Man of Lawlessness will enjoy seeing this event and, therefore by implication, his own salvation.

¹⁴ The man in linen’s final words to Daniel are to keep living his life until he dies. Literally, he says, “As for you, go die.” Therefore, Daniel is meant to live out the rest of his life in a manner that corresponds to all these true ideas from God, because the end result for him will be that he acquires the “rest” of eternal life that will be granted to all biblically inward people after the inception of the Messianic Kingdom under Jesus at his return.