

Introduction to Daniel

1-Staying True to the True King -6

2-Four Earthly Kingdoms-7

3-Kings Who Set Themselves Over God- 8

4-God's Punishment on Proud Kingdoms-9

5-Only God's Kingdom Endures-10-12

&gt; 66 YEARS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

- Daniel serves under the government of Nebuchadnezzar the Babylonian King (beginning 605BC) to just beyond the time the Medes and Persians defeat the Babylonians (Cyrus 539 BC).

A "WISE MAN" BUT ALSO A PROPHET

- The prophet Ezekiel lists Daniel , who lived during his time, as among the wise (Ezekiel 14:14,20, 28:3). "Are you wiser than Daniel?"
- Daniel is never called a prophet in the Old Testament, probably due to his position in the government and role as a "wise man." But he is called one in the New Testament. (Mt 24:15)

## Daniel's World

1. Describe the political situation of the Assyrians, Babylonians, Egypt, and Judah.
2. Note what prominent Old Testament prophets were on the scene:
3. What changed in 605 BC?
4. Read 2 Ki 24:10-16 regarding the second deportation (597 BC)
5. Read 2 Kings 25:1-21 What happens next (586 BC)?
6. If Daniel was taken captive at about the age of fifteen, at least how old would he have been before his death?

## Daniel as Author

1. List at least three good reasons why we can say Daniel was the author of the book:
2. What are some reasons why some try to discredit Daniel as the sole author, why do we not accept these reasons?
3. What is a unique aspect about the language of the book?

## Basic Content or Outline

Historical content Chapters 1-6

Prophetic content Chapters 7-12



## THE APOCRYPHAL BOOKS

- Apocryphal writings began to appear with the Greek translation of the Hebrew Text (around 200BC).
- Some contain useful historical information. Others are merely pious writings which try to teach laws and virtues.
- Even some of these books themselves acknowledge that God was silent during these 400 years and that “there was no prophet seen in Israel.” (1 Maccabees 9:27)
- In the apocryphal writings we see things which support the doctrine of purgatory, women are given the full blame for sin, work righteousness etc. The New Testament does not acknowledge these doctrines or additions as inspired text.

## ABOUT ETERNAL SALVATION

- But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered. Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.
- -Daniel 12:2-3

## Basic Content or Outline (continued)

Chapters 1-6 during the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius the Mede, and Cyrus

Chapters 7-12 repeat starting from Nebuchadnezzar → Darius/Cyrus

For our study we'll be dividing the book into five topical divisions

<i>Daniel 1</i>	- Staying True to the True King -	<i>Daniel 6</i>
<i>Daniel 2</i>	-Four Earthly Kingdoms -	<i>Daniel 7</i>
<i>Daniel 3</i>	- Kings who Set Themselves Over God -	<i>Daniel 8</i>
<i>Daniel 4</i>	-God's Punishment on Proud Kingdoms -	<i>Daniel 9</i>
<i>Daniel 5</i>	-Only God's Kingdom Endures -	<i>Daniel 10-12</i>

## Apocryphal Additions

1. Why is the Roman Catholic version of Daniel longer?
2. List at least three reasons why both liberal and conservative scholars reject these additions as part of the original text:
3. Do you agree? “It is not up to the papacy to declare a book inspired any more than it is up to liberal scholars to declare a book not inspired.”
4. Agree or Disagree: “A bible with the Apocrypha is definitely the better bible. After all, you can always choose to disregard the "extra" scriptures if you decide (at some future date) that they are not worth reading. “
5. Why is this statement incorrect: “The Holy Bible was compiled by the Catholic Church. Luther had no right to remove seven books because they were also inspired books.”

## Theme and Purpose

- What could you give as a good theme for the book?
- What use do we have for it today?



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**MORE THAN HEALTH CONSCIOUS**

- The word translated "vegetables" can also include grains and cereals. But Daniel was not on a health diet! This was a spiritual act of worship.
- It is likely that the King's food offered to him were in some way connected with idolatry. Daniel wouldn't want to give any impression he was participating with the food offered to false gods. (Compare 1 Corinthians 8:1-13)
- The food may also have been improperly killed, without proper draining of blood that was required by God.
- Finally, the meat may have been from unclean animals such as swine.

## Review

1. Describe Daniel's changed world.
2. Why do we say Daniel was really the author of this book (but not author of Apocryphal books)?

## Read Chapter 1

1. The very first two verses set the context of the entire book. Who is at odds with each other?
2. What were three great changes in Daniel's life? How did he respond?
3. Why was it important for Daniel and the other three men to avoid certain foods?
4. What things in this chapter make it clear that God is still in control?

## Discuss

1. It appeared that Nebuchadnezzar had toppled the God of Israel and subdued him as a prisoner. How does the Church of God today appear beaten yet remain triumphant in the end?
2. Daniel *requested permission* to avoid certain foods. How does this already begin to show he acts with wisdom?
3. What excuses could Daniel have given for just eating the king's food? How did God work to bless Daniel behind the scenes?
4. List some hard choices that young people have to face during major transitions in life. How does this chapter help?
5. What events in your nation today make you especially glad to know that God is still in control?



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TOWARD JERUSALEM

- Praying "toward Jerusalem" (v. 10) evidently based on 1 Kings 8:35,38,44,48, phrases used by Solomon at the dedication of the temple.
- This openly signaled where Daniel looked to for his God, the God of Abram, Isaac, and Jacob.

WHO WAS DARIUS THE MEDE?

- The year of his reign is 539 when Cyrus the Persian took control of the city from Belshazzar who was married to Nebuchadnezzar's granddaughter. History leaves us guessing whether Darius was 1) Cyrus himself, 2) a governor appointed by Cyrus over the city (such as Gubaru or Ugbaru) 3) The word "Darius" may have been taken on as a title rather than just a proper name. (Similar to "Pharaoh" or "Caesar")
- Daniel 6:28 seems to indicate a dual reign. However, "and" here may be translated "namely," and thus indicate Darius and Cyrus are the same person.

## Context and Review

1. Cyrus the Persian took control in 539. About how old would Daniel be in this account?

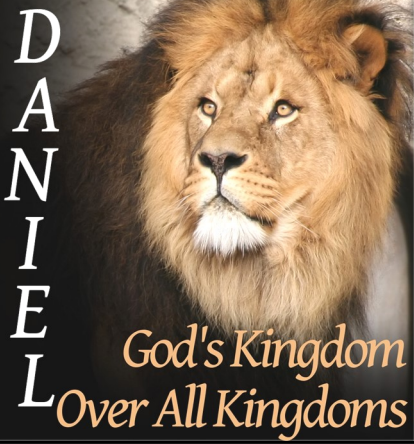
## Read Chapter 6

1. What was it that caused the other rulers to scheme against Daniel?
2. What did they see as Daniel's "weak spot"?
3. Who is set at odds with each other in this chapter? How does this fit the theme of the book?
4. Describe the rescue that takes place noting the details.

## Discuss Chapter 6

1. What is especially striking about Daniel's conduct. Explain why this is different from "putting God to the test."
2. Reflect: What are some things you do to let others know that you worship the Lord alone? What might pressure you or other believers to hide this truth?
3. Jealousy often can stem from the envy of God's blessings for his faithful people. Jealousy is the response of the sinful heart. What good responses can the new-self show when others are blessed by God?
4. In the end, the King did not consider Daniel's faith a hindrance to serving in the government. How do you see governmental leaders today 'forced' to step aside from displaying their faith? How can this be both good and bad?
5. List some hard choices that you or others might be forced to make in your career (especially as you succeed and grow popular). How does this account help you?





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## THE KING ACKNOWLEDGES DANIEL'S GOD

- Is there any evidence Nebuchadnezzar was converted to the true religion? If not, how might he best be described?

## PULVERIZED NATIONS

In what way will the Messiah crush all other nations to dust?

- Isaiah 28:16 & Romans 9:33
- Mt 16:18
- Micah 7:16
- Malachi 4:1-3
- Revelation 18

## Review chapters 1 & 6

1. What did Daniel do both at the start of his time in Babylon and near the end of his time in Babylon?

## Read Daniel 2

1. Describe the situation as Daniel and his three companions are fearful of execution.
2. Recount the dream and Daniel's interpretation from God.

## Discuss Daniel 2

1. Compare and contrast the confidence of the astrologers with Daniel's attitude. How does Daniel give credit to God when credit is due? What other words show his humility?
2. The king had "a man among the exiles from Judah" interpret his dream for him. How would this change the king's attitude toward the Jews? List some truths that Nebuchadnezzar would have learned by the end of this chapter:
3. Which four kingdoms in history fulfill Daniel's interpretation? What is "rock that was cut out, but not by human hands"? Does it point to his first or second coming?
4. Kingdoms of this world come and go. What comfort does this chapter give you?

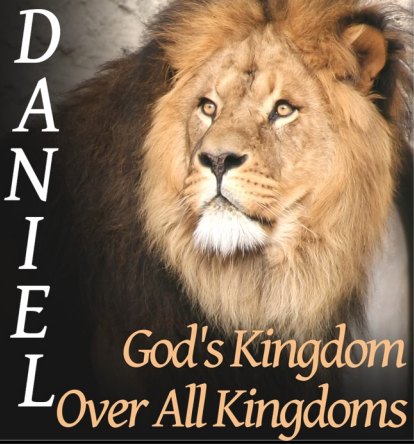
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*Kingdom depicted*

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WHEN WAS THIS VISION?

- 553 B.C., 14 years before chapter 5.

WHAT TIME SPAN OF HISTORY DOES THIS VISION COVER?

LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS

What is the horn?

- "This horn was waging war against the saints and defeating them ." (Dan 7:21)
- "The Pope is the very Antichrist." (Smalcald Articles, Part II, Art. IV,10)

REVELATION'S SYMBOLISM

- "He was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation. " - Rev 7:12
- Jesus takes up on the imagery of this chapter and uses the symbolism to speak of the governments of this world and the false church which works with it against the saints.

## Read Daniel 7

- List the various things included in Daniel's vision and note their features. Use what we discussed in chapter 2 to begin filling in the chart below.

Symbol	Features	Represents
Lion		
Bear		
Leopard		
Beast		
Ten Horns		
Little Horn		
Ancient of Days		
Son of Man		
Saints of Most High		

## Discuss Daniel 7

1. What similarities do you see between this vision and chapter 2? What is added here?
2. Explain why our Lutheran Confessions indicate that the Roman papacy fulfills everything done by the little boastful horn.
3. Both the secular governments and the boastful horn which rises out of Rome will persecute the faithful people of God. What comfort do you find in this chapter regarding persecution of God's people?
4. Reread verses 13-14. Why must this be the center and focus of Daniel's whole book?



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## "EVEN IF HE DOES NOT..."

- Are you willing to remain faithful to God under trials even if he does not rescue us?
- ... (they) through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of the flames . . . (Heb 11:33-34)
- "Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. " (Mt 24:9)
- This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints. (Rev 13:10)

"THEY PAY NO ATTENTION TO YOU,  
KING"

- Contrast the rage and impulsive attitude of the king with the collected and steadfastness displayed by the three men.
- How did these men share their faith in contrast to the king's methods?

## Review Daniel (chapters 1,2,6,7)

1. Chapter 2 & 7 What four kingdoms are prophesied? What trouble would arise? What happens in the end to save God's people?
2. Chapter 1 What position do Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah have? What debt of gratitude did the astrologers owe one of their fellow advisors who was a Jew?

## Read Daniel 3

1. Once again, who is set against who?
2. List some important details the bring out the extraordinary nature of this account.
3. Examine and evaluate the response given by the three men to the king.

## Discuss Daniel 3

1. Why are both idol worship and the kingdoms of this world always based on intimidation? How is the worship of God and his kingdom entirely different? What does it mean to "fear God"?
2. There are many ways Satan tries to set up himself and place things in our life above God. Often fear and intimidation is the driving force behind his work. What situations or pressures in your life will led you to repeat the bold statement of verse 16-18?
3. Would forced religious tolerance under threat make any difference in the number of believers in the true God? Explain your answer.
4. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were used by God to demonstrate an important truth for the Jews in exile, and for everyone, —including you. Recall how Nebuchadnezzar was there to witness the destruction of Jerusalem. He was now only further setting himself up over the God of Israel. What ought this event have led him now to do? What does this account help led God's people to do?



Read Daniel 8

INCLUDED IN VISION	INTERPRETATION HELP	FULFILLMENTS WHICH FIT
Ram (vv.3-4)	(v.20)	
Goat (vv. 5-14)	(v.21)	
1 & 4 horns (v. 8)	(v.21-22)	
another horn (vv.9-12)	(22-25)	
The Beautiful Land (v.9)		
Starry hosts (vv.10-12)	(v.24)	
The Prince of princes (v.25)		
2,300 evenings & mornings (vv.13-14)	(v.26-27)	

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ANOTHER HORN

Laws Imposed by Antiochus IV

(175-163 BC)

- Jews could not assemble for prayer.
- Observance of the Sabbath was forbidden.
- Circumcision was illegal.
- Illegal to posses the Scriptures.
- It was illegal to refuse to eat hogs or any other food that was prohibited by the Mosaic Law.
- It was illegal not to participate in the monthly sacrifice honoring Antiochus. This involved eating of the meat that had been offered in sacrifice.
- The penalty for breaking any of these laws was death.
- Killed over 80,000 faithful Jews

WHEN IS THIS FULFILLED?

- Jesus speaks of Daniel's prophecies as fulfilled **after his time** and in the days of the end time, that is, between his first and second coming. (Mt 24:15)

- 1) God has often given prophecy of places and events which also point forward to a final and distant fulfillment for God's Church and the world. Consider, for example, how David's son (2 Sa 7) is fulfilled in Solomon, but the prophecy is only fulfilled in Christ. List some events in Israel toward the end of the Grecian Empire which do initially fit what is prophesied here. Who is Antiochus IV? What was the Maccabean Revolt? Why is the event of 165 BC still celebrated by Jews today?
- 2) The vision, however, isn't limited to the events in history in the Grecian Empire. "The vision concerns the time of the end."(v. 17) In the last days the place of the sanctuary of God is brought low (v.11) and truth is "thrown to the ground" (v.12) What would also fit the fulfillment of "another horn" which is <sup>a)</sup> set against the Prince of princes, <sup>b)</sup> defiles the place of God's sanctuary, and <sup>c)</sup> is destroyed yet not by human power?
- 3) How are both the boastful horn of chapter 7 and this horn undone? What is the main message given in the vision? Explain how it fits the theme of Daniel's book and comforts Christians throughout history.
- 4) Read the concluding verse and recall Daniel's gift from God. What does all this say about our attitude when trying to give an exact interpretation and chronology to the visions of this chapter?





# DANIEL

God's Kingdom  
Over All Kingdoms

## Punishment on Proud Kingdoms

Page 9

### Review

Briefly recount the following:

Historical events in chapters 1,2,3,6

Visions in chapters 7, 8.

### Read Daniel 4

1. Describe the Dream:
2. What was the interpretation?
3. In verse 27 God tell us his purpose in giving this dream

### Discuss Daniel 4

1. Could God have used a mental illness to bring about this prophecy?
2. Are there things which indicate this was more than just a mental illness which afflicted Nebuchadnezzar?
3. What comfort do you see for yourself in this chapter?
4. Could Nebuchadnezzar have avoided this embarrassing event?
5. What warning do you see for yourself in this chapter?
6. Why does pride stand before God as such a terrible sin? What might be considered god-pleasing pride?

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#### WAS NEBUCHADNEZZAR A FAITHFUL BELIEVER IN THE TRUE GOD?

- Consider his writing after the humbling event:
- 4:8 He is called Belteshazzar, after the name of my god, and the spirit of the holy gods is in him.
- Historical records show he was loyal to the Babylonian gods in the end.

#### SEVEN TIMES WILL PASS BY

- In visions, numbers represent indefinite periods of time. This could mean seven years or seven months, or seven seasons. Or it could just be taken to mean a period of time after which God will have completed his purpose.

“THOSE WHO WALK IN PRIDE HE IS ABLE TO HUMBLE. “

- Discuss: Why is being humbled by God the worse thing that can happen to an unbeliever? Why is it a good thing when God humbles us?



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## IS 70 SEVENS 490 LITERAL YEARS?

The decree of Cyrus in 538 BC fits very well for the start of this period (Isaiah 44:28; 45:13). But the duration and time spans of the sevens are unknown to us. Usually prophecy in Scripture will use real numbers to indicate an indefinite period of time known only to God. In this case, God himself reveals in other parts of Scripture that only he knows when this time is complete and the end will finally come. We cannot predict dates with this prophecy. Nor do 490 years fit well in any literal 490 year time-frame.

## WHO IS THE ANOINTED ONE?

Only Jesus fulfills what this anointed one will do: suffer to atone for sin. (Compare vs Dan 9:26 with Isaiah 53:8) It also makes sense if we take verse 27 to be a covenant confirmed by Christ, with sevens being a number associated with God and it is God who makes a covenant with his people in Scripture, not the antichrist.

## THE ANOINTED ONE WILL COME

Wouldn't it be nice if this passage were known as "The Prophecy of the Coming of the Messiah" rather than "The Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks"? —Thomas Nass, Professor of Hebrew at Martin Luther College



## Read Daniel 9:1-18

1) The start of the rule of Darius takes us to 539-538 BC. Why is this a significant phase of time for the Israelites? (compare verse 25)

2) What did Jeremiah prophesy? (Jer. 25:11-12, 29:10.)

3) According to Daniel, why did God cause the exile?

## Discuss Daniel 9:1-18

1) Compare and contrast how God dealt with proud Israel versus how he dealt with proud Nebuchadnezzar.

2) What was there to give the Israelites hope as they were crushed for their sinful pride and rebellion?

3) What things do you find in this prayer that are good for you and I to emulate in our prayers?

## Read Daniel 9:19-27

1) Try not to get lost in the details of numbers and focus on the main point. List six things which will be accomplished by the end of the 70 sevens: (vs 24)

2) List a few of the main points of this prophecy:

## Discuss Daniel 9:19-27

1) What are some biblical conclusions we could make? Use those conclusions to graph out one possible chronology.

2) Why is it important to not get too hung up on the details of chronology of the prophecies given in visions, but to focus on the main message?

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## WHEN DOES THIS HAPPEN?

The end of the Babylonian reign places this chapter at 539 BC when the Persian army was encamped around the city. The Babylonian armies had all already been defeated. Belshazzar was married to the granddaughter of Nebuchadnezzar II. He was co-regent for Nabonidus (note his offering Daniel position as "third highest ruler" not second highest.)

Cyrus took the city without facing strong opposition. His united kingdom of Media and Persia lasted for two centuries.

## WHO IS DARIUS THE MEDE?

Some historians consider Darius to be Cyrus himself. His age certainly fits right in with other historical records. Others think Darius might have been a ruler named Gubaru, who would have been entrusted with the rule of the city under Cyrus. The Medo-Persian title Darius may have been used like the title Pharaoh or Caesar.

## Review Daniel 1-4, 6-9

- 1) Recall the events and main point of each chapter.

## Read Daniel 5

- 1) Describe the scene as Belshazzar is having his party. What do his actions say about him? What drove the king from celebration to complete fear?
- 2) Why does Daniel say the writing has appeared? What was the interpretation of the writing?
- 3) What are some things Daniel lists which make the attitude and sin of Belshazzar even worse than Nebuchadnezzar's sins?

## Discuss Daniel 5

- 1) The historian Herodotus notes that the city fell while people were celebrating a festival in Babylon. Belshazzar is getting drunk and disgracing the LORD even as the army of Cyrus surrounds the city. How is the same defiant and careless attitude still seen today?
- 2) Daniel rejected the king's reward. He didn't soften a harsh message for the king. The attractive rewards offered to Daniel wouldn't change the message Daniel had to deliver. Though he was now about eighty years old, he boldly tells the king the judgments of God. When does it become vitally important to give a strong word of warning to someone?
- 3) Belshazzar should have taken to heart what happened to Nebuchadnezzar. He was aware of it. Yet he chose to defy God. When might you or I be guilty of sinning "against better knowledge"?
- 4) Babylon fell just as Isaiah and Jeremiah had prophesied. Why? "You said in your heart, 'I will ascend into heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; ...I will make myself like the Most High.'" (Isaiah 14:13, 14) What comfort do these facts give you and all who trust in the Lord?
- 5) What would be a good summary or theme to describe this chapter?



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## WHO IS THE ONE THAT APPEARS TO DANIEL IN THESE CHAPTERS?

- In all other instances Michael the arch angel is identified. Here it cannot be Michael, but it is one who protects Michael.
- Compare the description in Chapter 10 with the man who appears in Ezekiel 1:26–28 and Revelation 1:13–15. There he is clearly identified as the Son of God.

## CHAPTER 11

- The lengthy descriptions here have been called the Most detailed prophecy of history in Scripture.
- Jesus refers to this prophecy as a foreshadowing of when Rome would also destroy the temple. (Matthew 24:15)
- "Reports from the east and the north will alarm him." *This possibly refers to news about the spread of Islam in the east and to the success of the Reformation in Germany (the north). There the pure gospel was restored and consciences were liberated from slavery to papal decrees and threats.* -J.C. Jeske, *People's Bible*

## Read Daniel 10-11

- 1) Describe the scene of Chapter 10. What is the vision about and how does Daniel respond to it all? What helps Daniel endure it?

## Discuss Daniel 10-11

The thought that there are spiritual forces, agents of Satan and agents of God, working to influence the tide of history further impress on us our reliance on God. "Our struggle [as Christians] is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." (Ephesians 6:12) What else does Scripture say about the work of demons and of good angels?

## The events of chapter 11 are fulfilled in history:

- 11:2 Fourth King of Persia=Xerxes. He lost a great battle to Greece.
- 11:3-4 =Alexander the Great, empire divided.
- 11:5Kings of the North = Syrian rulers, Seleucids; Kings of the South = Egyptian rulers, Ptolemies.
- 11:6-20 Palestine would be caught between bloody struggles between Egypt and Syria , Antiochus III of Syria bankrupts the nation with waging war, his daughter sides with Egypt.
- 11:21-ff Antiochus IV Epiphanes usurps the throne. Recall Daniel 8 and the horn that grew out of the four goat horns.
- 11:28 Antiochus Epiphanes defiles the temple.
- 11:30 Ships from the west= 168 BC Rome steps in to help Egypt, on his return Antiochus favors apostate Jews and seeks to wipe out Judaism.
- 11:32 Some Jews would resist and rebel (Maccabaeus?)
- 11:36 = More than just Antiochus? <— the fourth beast and antichrist of Daniel 7.
- 11:40 "The time of the end" = The last days when the church will struggle against the Antichrist

DESPITE THE DEVIL'S RAGING ATTACKS GOD'S PEOPLE WILL SURVIVE AND BE SPARED!

"He will come to his end, and no one will help him." Compare Revelation 18:2  
"Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great!"



## Read Daniel 12

- 1) The days leading up to the end of the world will be a battle between Satan and God's angels. The Church will face attacks. The enemies of God will use deception and satanic powers. But in the end they will fail. What will happen on the last day?
- 2) What are the two very different fates when all flesh is raised back to life?

## Discuss Daniel 12

- 1) What is "the book?" Compare with (Ps 69:28; Ph4:3; Rev.3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12,15.)
- 2) Some people like to make God into a helpless and weak father who tolerates sin with a small slap on the wrist. They cannot envision God giving eternal punishment to the sinner. What does this chapter have to say about that attitude?
- 3) What awesome picture of mercy is given alongside God's judgment and justice?
- 4) In light of Scripture, what is meant by "those who are wise" and "those who lead many to righteousness"?
- 5) Recall Jesus' words about his return, "When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" (Lk 18:8) The end will come when "the power of the holy people has been finally broken." We don't know exactly when the Last Day will come, but what signs will tell us it is near? How might this sign be fulfilled?
- 6) How does the book close with a note of joy for Daniel and for all who follow after him in faith?

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## WHEN DOES CHAPTER 12 TAKE PLACE?

- After all the events of chapter 11, in which persecution and trials for the people of God are listed. The last chapter ended by speaking of "the time of the end", the destruction of the Antichrist, and when Satan's work fails.
- Jesus refers to the same thing leading up to the great day of judgment: "There will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again." (Mt 24:21).

## SEAL IT UP

- Not to hide the prophecy, but to preserve it for future generations. All Daniel's life of visions and prophecy was now complete to share with future generations. What things did you find in this book that lead you to thank God for preserving his Word?

## WHEN WILL THIS ALL TAKE PLACE?

- "Times, time, and half a time"  
1290/1335 days = 3.5 years = 42 months (Rev. 11:2-3) = Time of persecution.
- "Go your way, Daniel," ... "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority" (Acts 1:7)

