

Daniel 11-12 • Kings Giving Way to THE King

Introduction

These chapters give secular and liberal theological scholars more problems than any others in Scripture. This is because they so accurately reflect history in even the smallest detail that such academics go to great lengths to try and prove that Daniel “must have” been written long after these things occurred and not documented in advance. So the next best thing they do is to re-cast history, spinning it differently from its true biblical roots. We have grown up with books and movies about Alexander the Great, Xerxes and his battle with the 300 Spartans, Cleopatra’s intrigues, etc. – all of which were predicted in Scripture. The world does this in order to hide the truth that God is the God of history and to fool Christians into thinking that the secular historical record has more weight than the authority of Scripture. Christians need to take back possession of these chapters because, in truth, they have only been fulfilled to a point. These passages which so accurately portray what **HAS** happened still have a lot to say about what **WILL** happen. And if God paid such attention to fulfilling everything so accurately to date, how much more the things to come!

One of the reasons the book of Daniel is organized the way it is has to do with the Holy Spirit focusing us on what is important. In Daniel 2 we were presented with an overview of the six great empires: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, the last earthly kingdom to come, and the kingdom of God. In Daniel 7 these kingdoms were represented by beasts to teach something about each one’s character and nature. In Daniel 8 the focus is narrowed down to just two of these empires: Medo-Persia and Greece. In Daniel 11 the focus is narrowed further to just Greece, first emphasizing the four basic kingdoms created from the break-up of Alexander’s empire, then on two of those kingdoms in particular, Egypt and Syria. This is because caught in the middle is Israel who is an object of repeated conquest between them. And finally it is shown how these things foreshadow the final earthly kingdom to come and Christ’s ultimate triumph. The Holy Spirit is teaching us something about how the whole of history is destined to be fulfilled according to God’s Word and will.

¹“In the first year of Darius the Mede, I arose to be an encouragement and a protection for him. ²And now I will tell you the truth. Behold, three more kings are going to arise in Persia. Then a fourth will gain far more riches than all of them; as soon as he becomes strong through his riches, he will arouse the whole empire against the realm of Greece. ³And a mighty king will arise, and he will rule with great authority and do as he pleases. ⁴But as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom will be broken up and parceled out toward the four points of the compass, though not to his own descendants, nor according to his authority which he wielded, for his sovereignty will be uprooted and given to others besides them.

[Read 11:1-4]

Q: Who are the three kings who will arise after Darius?

1. Ahasuerus (Ezra 4:6), a.k.a. Cambyses.
2. Artaxerxes (Ezra 4:7), a.k.a. Pseudo-Smerdis
3. Darius (Ezra 4:24), a.k.a. Hystaspes

Q: Who is the fourth king who will be more powerful than them all?

A: Xerxes, who attempted to invade Greece in 480 BC. The mention of how he will “arouse the whole empire” refers to the 4 years he spent assembling an army of 2,641,000 troops from all over his empire to support his invasion.

Q: Who is the next king to rise per v.3 “with great authority”?

A: Alexander the Great, represented by the one-horned goat in Daniel 7. He invades Persia in 334 BC.

Q: How did v.4 literally come true where Alexander’s kingdom was concerned?

A: Upon his death his generals divided the empire into four kingdoms. None of them were his descendants, nor would they accrue power and authority like Alexander.

1. Lysimachus took Thrace and Bithynia
2. Cassander took Macedonia
3. Ptolemy I Soter took Egypt
4. Seleucus I Nicator took Syria

Q: Who is being referred to in v.4 as “others besides them”?

A: There were many smaller parts of Alexander’s kingdom taken by lesser rulers. The four leaders listed above merely possessed the largest portions.

⁵“Then the king of the South will grow strong, along with one of his princes who will gain ascendancy over him and obtain dominion; his domain will be a great dominion indeed. ⁶After some years they will form an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the South will come to the king of the North to carry out a peaceful arrangement. But she will not retain her position of power, nor will he remain with his power, but she will be given up, along with those who brought her in and the one who sired her as well as he who supported her in those times. ⁷But one of the descendants of her line will arise in his place, and he will come against their army and enter the fortress of the king of the North, and he will deal with them and display great strength. ⁸Also their gods with their metal images and their precious vessels of silver and gold he will take into captivity to Egypt, and he on his part will refrain from attacking the king of the North for some years. ⁹Then the latter will enter the realm of the king of the South, but will return to his own land.

[Read 11:5-9]

Q: Who was the “king of the South” in v.5?

A: Ptolemy I Soter of Egypt (323-285 BC)

Q: Who was “one of his princes”?

A: Seleucus I Nicator was a subordinate under Ptolemy when the empire was united under Alexander. But afterward Seleucus became a king in his own right over Syria and the surrounding area.

Q: What was the alliance referred to in v.6?

A: Ptolemy I and Seleucus I agreed to end years of war between them which helped to extend the reigns of their offspring.

Q: Who was the “daughter of the South”?

A: Berenice was the daughter of Ptolemy II Philadelphus. She was given in marriage to Antiochus II Theos who at that time was the “king of the North”. He divorced his current wife Laodice for the sake of this arrangement.

Q: How did Laodice fulfill the last half of v.6?

A: When Ptolemy died, Antiochus took her back. Unfortunately for him she poisoned him and had Berenice and her son put to death so that Laodice’s son, Seleucus II Callinicus, instead becomes king.

Q: Who in v.7 was “one of her descendants”?

A: This was Berenice’s brother, Ptolemy III Euergetes, who took the Egyptian throne and became the next “king of the South”

Q: How did he fulfill the events in v.7?

A: Ptolemy III avenged his sister’s death by overrunning the Syrian kingdom (“king of the North”) all the way to the Euphrates and put Laodice to death for killing his sister.

Q: How did Ptolemy III’s spoils of war mirror that mentioned in v.8?

A: He returned to Egypt not just with great treasure but with over 2,400 images that the kings of Persia had taken when they previously conquered Egypt and ruled the Middle East. They Egyptians were so gratified that they bestowed on him the name “Euergetes” meaning “Benefactor”.

Q: Why does it state in v.8 that he “will refrain from attacking”?

A: Ptolemy III lived 4 years longer than Seleucus II without further warring with the “king of the North”.

Q: How did Seleucus II fulfill v.9?

A: He did not foray far nor long into Egypt against Ptolemy III.

¹⁰“His sons will mobilize and assemble a multitude of great forces; and one of them will keep on coming and overflow and pass through, that he may again wage war up to his very fortress. ¹¹The king of the South will be enraged and go forth and fight with the king of the North. Then the latter will raise a great multitude, but that multitude will be given into the hand of the former. ¹²When the multitude is carried away, his heart will be lifted up, and he will cause tens of thousands to fall; yet he will not prevail. ¹³For the king of the North will again raise a greater multitude than the former, and after an interval of some years he will press on with a great army and much equipment.

[Read 11:10-13]

Q: Whose sons are mentioned in v.10?

A: These were the sons of Seleucus III Ceraunus and Antiochus III the Great.

Q: Who was the “one of them” who waged war?

A: Antiochus III warred with the next king of the South, Ptolemy IV Philopater until he recovered all the parts of Syria lost to Ptolemy III. “Up to his fortress” refers to his incursions all the way to the fortified city of Raphia in Gaza.

Q: Who was involved in the ruckus mentioned in v.11?

A: Ptolemy IV defeated Antiochus III’s army of 70,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry, killing 10,000 and taking 4,000 captive.

Q: So why does it state in v.12 “yet he will not prevail”?

A: Instead of pursuing Antiochus III and completely overtaking “the king of the North”, Ptolemy IV makes peace and thus delays the problems between them to another day. The reference that he caused “tens of thousands to fall” refers to the well-documented depraved lifestyle and beliefs which he indulged in and by which he lead astray his people.

Q: To what campaigns is v.13 referring?

A: Antiochus III (“the king of the North”) conducts successful campaigns against Persia and India. 14 years after his defeat at Raphia, Antiochus III engages the new “king of the South” – Ptolemy V Epiphanes – who had just assumed the throne as a child.

¹⁴“Now in those times many will rise up against the king of the South; the violent ones among your people will also lift themselves up in order to fulfill the vision, but they will fall down. ¹⁵Then the king of the North will come, cast up a siege ramp and capture a well-fortified city; and the forces of the South will not stand their ground, not even their choicest troops, for there will be no strength to make a stand. ¹⁶But he who comes against him will do as he pleases, and no one will be able to withstand him; he will also stay for a time in the Beautiful Land, with destruction in his hand. ¹⁷He will set his face to come with the power of his whole kingdom, bringing with him a proposal of peace which he will put into effect; he will also give him the daughter of women to ruin it. But she will not take a stand for him or be on his side. ¹⁸Then he will turn his face to the coastlands and capture many. But a commander will put a stop to his scorn against him; moreover, he will repay him for his scorn. ¹⁹So he will turn his face toward the fortresses of his own land, but he will stumble and fall and be

[Read 11:14-19]

Q: Who were the “many” who rose up against the king of the South?

A: Antiochus III was joined by Philip the King of Macedon along with Egyptian rebels who warred against Ptolemy V.

Q: Who were “the violent one’s among your people”?

A: These were Jews who aided and provisioned Antiochus III as he moved through Israel against Ptolemy V.

Q: Why does it state in v.14 that these Jews “will fall down”?

A: Even though Antiochus III attacks the Egyptian garrison in Jerusalem, Israel is not freed.

Q: How did v.15 come true historically?

A: Antiochus III defeats the Egyptian general Scopas at the city of Paneas near the course of the Jordan River. Scopas fled to Sidon. Egypt sends its choicest army under the command of Erpus, Menocles, and Damoxenus who are unable to rescue Scopas’ army.

Q: How did this play into events described in v.16?

A: Israel comes under control of Antiochus III but rather than gaining political independence or freedom, Israel becomes a base of military operations and the site of much of the conflict between the warring kingdoms.

found no more.

²⁰“Then in his place one will arise who will send an oppressor through the Jewel of his kingdom; yet within a few days he will be shattered, though not in anger nor in battle. ²¹In his place a despicable person will arise, on whom the honor of kingship has not been conferred, but he will come in a time of tranquility and seize the kingdom by intrigue. ²²The overflowing forces will be flooded away before him and shattered, and also the prince of the covenant. ²³After an alliance is made with him he will practice deception, and he will go up and gain power with a small force of people. ²⁴In a time of tranquility he will enter the richest parts of the realm, and he will accomplish what his fathers never did, nor his ancestors; he will distribute plunder, booty and possessions among them, and he will devise his schemes against strongholds, but only for a time. ²⁵He will stir up his strength and courage against the king of the South with a large army; so the king of the South will mobilize an extremely large and mighty army for war; but he will not stand, for schemes will be devised against him. ²⁶Those who eat his choice food will destroy him, and his army will overflow, but many will fall down slain. ²⁷As for both kings, their hearts will be intent on evil, and they will speak lies to each other at the same table; but it will not succeed, for the end is still to come at the appointed time. ²⁸Then he will return to his land with much plunder; but his heart will be set against the holy covenant, and he will take action and then return to his own land.

Q: How did the events of v.17 bring some resolution to the situation?

A: Antiochus gave his daughter Cleopatra to Ptolemy V in marriage and includes Judea and part of Syria as a dowry. Antiochus' scheme is to acquire the Egyptian kingdom through this marriage but Cleopatra favored her husband over her father, thus defeating the scheme.

Q: According to v.18 what did Antiochus do next?

A: He goes to war with Rome and captures many Aegean islands but is turned back at Magnesia by Roman general Lucius Scipio Asiaticus in 190 BC. The reference to “his scorn” reflects that this conflict was not strictly political but personal in nature.

Q: According to v.19, how did things end for Antiochus III?

A: Compelled by Rome to relinquish all of the territory west of Taurus and to pay tribute to defray the cost of the war between them, Antiochus III garrisoned the cities left to him. He is subsequently slain in an insurrection by his own soldiers at Elymais when he attempted to plunder its temple of Jupiter in order to raise the tribute he was required to pay.

[Read 11:20-28]

Q: So who arose to take the place of Antiochus III?

A: His son, Seleucus IV Philopater. As indicated in v.20, he sends Heliodorus to Jerusalem to plunder the temple and take back the “dowry” of Judea promised with the marriage of Cleopatra.

Q: How did things end for Seleucus IV?

A: A few years later Heliodorus poisons him in an attempt to usurp the throne but Antiochus IV Epiphanes – Seleucus' brother – ascended to the throne supplanting Seleucus IV's son (Demetrius) who was away at the time on a visit to Rome.

Q: How was Antiochus IV the “despicable person” described in v.21?

A: Although “*Epiphanes*” means “illustrious”, he was often called “Epimanes”, a play on words that meant “Madman”. Among his more colorful behaviors was carousing with people of low character, bathing with them in the public baths, and throwing stones at passers-by. He may be the first “frat boy” in recorded history.

Q: How did he “seize the kingdom by intrigue”?

A: Never actually having had the kingdom formerly conferred on him, he obtained it by “flattering” Eumenes and Attalus of Pergamos to help him as well as by conducting a campaign among the Syrian people of personally embracing one and all.

Q: Who was “the prince of the covenant” mentioned in v.22?

A: This was the new king of Egypt, Ptolemy VI Philometor, the son of Cleopatra, the sister of Antiochus IV. In other words, Ptolemy IV is Antiochus IV's nephew. Ptolemy IV's guardian initiates a war with Antiochus IV to win back the dowry of Judea but was soundly defeated.

Q: What deception did Antiochus IV engage in according to v.23?

A: He feigned friendship with the young Ptolemy VI offering to help “organize” Ptolemy's kingdom. Instead Antiochus IV took possession of Memphis and all of Egypt proper, throwing off suspicion by employing a small force to do so.

Q: According to v.24, how did Antiochus IV “accomplish what his fathers never did”?

A: He takes all the strongholds and major cities of Egypt with the exception of Alexandria.

Q: How did Antiochus IV follow this up in v.25?

A: He conducts formal, open warfare with his army throughout Egypt. The “schemes” referred to was when he left Ptolemy IV in Memphis as a puppet power to make it look like all of Antiochus IV’s actions were taken on behalf of his nephew.

Q: Who are “those who eat his choice food” in v.26?

A: Ptolemy VI’s advisors did not warn him as to Antiochus IV’s true motives and schemes. Finally Antiochus IV subdued the Egyptian army at Pelusium.

Q: How did their relationship end according to v.27?

A: Each tried to manipulate the other for their own personal agenda but it was God’s agenda that would prevail – “*the end is still to come at the appointed time*”.

Q: What did Antiochus IV do in v.28 as he returned to his native Syria?

A: He attacks and takes Jerusalem killing 80,000, taking 40,000 prisoner, and selling an additional 40,000 as slaves. He entered the Temple, took away the gold and silver vessels, sacrificed a swine on the altar, and sprinkled the sacrifice throughout the Temple.

[Read 11:29-35]

²⁹“At the appointed time he will return and come into the South, but this last time it will not turn out the way it did before.

³⁰For ships of Kittim will come against him; therefore he will be disheartened and will return and become enraged at the holy covenant and take action; so he will come back and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. ³¹Forces from him will arise, desecrate the sanctuary fortress, and do away with the regular sacrifice. And they will set up the abomination of desolation. ³²By smooth words he will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people who know their God will display strength and take action. ³³Those who have insight among the people will give understanding to the many; yet they will fall by sword and by flame, by captivity and by plunder for many days.

³⁴Now when they fall they will be granted a little help, and many will join with them in hypocrisy. ³⁵Some of those who have insight will fall, in order to refine, purge and make them pure until the end time; because it is still to come at the appointed time.

Q: Why did things not turn out the same the second time Antiochus IV heads to Egypt as the last time?

A: He assembled a great fleet and army for another invasion of Egypt while at the same time demanding the cession to him of Cyprus, Pelusium and everything around the mouth of the Nile. Ptolemy VI hires Greek mercenaries to meet him in battle. The Roman ambassador Popilius Loenas met Antiochus IV in Eleusis about 4 miles from Alexandria to deliver Rome’s demand to turn back. Antiochus IV submits.

Q: Who were the “ships of Kittim” referred to in v.30?

A: The Roman delegation arrived in Grecian ships from Kittim, another name for Cyprus.

Q: What does Antiochus IV do in his rage while returning home?

A: He sent Apollonius to destroy Jerusalem in 167 BC, 2 years after he had already subjugated it. From a fortress outside the Temple worshipers were ambushed and killed as they came to the Temple, effectively ending Temple worship. Sources indicate Antiochus IV’s forces were aided by rebel Jews and the high priest Menelaus himself. Additionally, Antiochus issued a decree ordering everyone to conform to the Greek religion and the Temple is dedicated to the god Jupiter Olympius.

Q: What was the “abomination of desolation” introduced by Antiochus IV in v.31?

A: He had a idol-altar and image of Jupiter erected upon the Temple’s altar of burnt offering. The image bore Antiochus’ face.

Q: What is v.32 describing?

A: Apostasy abounded for those Jews who assisted Antiochus IV's forces and who embraced the new religion. However, the Maccabees and their followers initiated a revolt.

Q: How did the Maccabean Revolt fulfill the elements of v.33?

A: They conducted a guerrilla campaign for about 3 years inflicting many casualties among the Jews. In his rage Antiochus IV ordered that some be roasted alive. Many were slain on the Sabbath when they refused to fight and profane the Lord's day.

Q: How did the Maccabeans receive help as indicated in v.34?

A: Freedom is short-lived as the Romans and Herodians soon take control of Judea. But a great many apostates who had served Antiochus switch to the Maccabeans' side upon their victory.

Q: What is the meaning of v.35?

A: This is where we transition from events that occurred historically to events which are yet to take place as indicated by "until the end time; because it is still to come at the appointed time".

[Read 11:36-39]

³⁶Then the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods; and he will prosper until the indignation is finished, for that which is decreed will be done. ³⁷He will show no regard for the gods of his fathers or for the desire of women, nor will he show regard for any other god; for he will magnify himself above them all. ³⁸But instead he will honor a god of fortresses, a god whom his fathers did not know; he will honor him with gold, silver, costly stones and treasures. ³⁹He will take action against the strongest of fortresses with the help of a foreign god; he will give great honor to those who acknowledge him and will cause them to rule over the many, and will parcel out land for a price.

Q: What are the characteristics of this final earthly king?

1. "...will do as he pleases..." (v.36)
2. "...he will exalt and magnify himself above every god..." (v.36)
3. "...will speak monstrous things against the God of gods..." (v.36)
4. "...he will prosper until the indignation is finished..." (v.36)
5. "He will show no regard for the gods of his fathers..." (v.37)
6. "...no regard...for the desire of women..." (v.37)
7. "...nor will he show regard for any other god..." (v.37)
8. "...he will magnify himself above them all." (v.37)
9. "...he will honor a god of fortresses, a god whom his fathers did not know...with gold, silver, costly stones and treasures." (v.38)
10. "He will take action against the strongest of fortresses with help from a foreign god..." (v.39)
11. "...he will give great honor to those who acknowledge him and cause them to rule over the many..." (v.39)
12. "...will parcel out land for a price." (v.39)

Q: Of whom is this specifically speaking?

A: The final person of the literal Antichrist.

Q: How do we know for sure that this is not a continuing description of Antiochus IV?

A: Right from the beginning he could not "do as he pleases" being under the control of Rome and all of the following activities are not historically assignable to him.

There was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him.

— Revelation 13:5

Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above

every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.
— 2 Thessalonians 2:3–4

⁴⁰“At the end time the king of the South will collide with him, and the king of the North will storm against him with chariots, with horsemen and with many ships; and he will enter countries, overflow them and pass through. ⁴¹He will also enter the Beautiful Land, and many countries will fall; but these will be rescued out of his hand: Edom, Moab and the foremost of the sons of Ammon. ⁴²Then he will stretch out his hand against other countries, and the land of Egypt will not escape. ⁴³But he will gain control over the hidden treasures of gold and silver and over all the precious things of Egypt; and Libyans and Ethiopians will follow at his heels. ⁴⁴But rumors from the East and from the North will disturb him, and he will go forth with great wrath to destroy and annihilate many. ⁴⁵He will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain; yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.

[Read 11:40-45]

Q: How does this section of Scripture cover a different aspect of the activities of the Antichrist than the previous section?

A: Whereas the previous section focused on the wickedness of the Antichrist characterized by his impudence and idolatry which mainly explain his rebellion against God, this section focuses on his earthly targets and how his rebellion is expressed against mankind.

Q: How does the object of conflict change in v.40 as compared with the verses leading up to it in chapter 11?

A: Previously the object was either the “king of the North” or the “king of the South” and the action they took against each other. Here it changes so that **BOTH** the “king of the North” and the “king of the South” enter into conflict with the Antichrist.

Q: So what is the initial result of the Antichrist’s efforts against them?

1. “...he will enter countries, overflow them and pass through.” (v.40)
2. “He will also enter the Beautiful Land...” (Israel) (v.41)
3. “...many countries will fall...” (v.41)
4. But “rescued out of his hand” will be “Edom, Moab and the foremost of the sons of Ammon.” (Modern-day Jordan and vicinity.) (v.41)
5. “...he will stretch out his hand against other countries...” (v.42)
6. “...Egypt will not escape.” (v.42)
7. “...he will gain control over...Egypt...Libyans and Ethiopians...” (v.43)

Point: It is a picture of most of the Middle East and North Africa being overrun, including Israel.

Q: What takes place after this initial campaign?

A: According to v.44 he is disturbed by “rumors from the East and the North” which enrage him to undertake a campaign not aimed at simply conquering but “to destroy and annihilate many”.

Q: What might v.45 reveal about the character of the Antichrist?

A: He seems to think that he is victorious, even making his headquarters in the land of Israel. Satan always tries to counterfeit God in every respect, and just as God once pitched His Tabernacle so the Antichrist in a similar manner pitches his.

[Read 12:1-4]

¹“Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued. ²Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt. ³Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and

Q: Why is Michael mentioned?

A: First and foremost it shows that what takes place on earth is a reflection of the spiritual warfare taking place in heaven. Michael is specifically associated with Israel and the fact that he “stands guard over the sons of your people” is a promise of protection for God’s people.

Q: What is the basic structure of the End Times as provided in these verses?

1. **The Suffering.** The Great Tribulation is here described as “a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation”. (v.1) [See Mt. 24:21]

those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. ⁴But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase.”

⁵Then 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. ⁶And one said to the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, “How long will it be until the end of these wonders?” ⁷I 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; and as soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people, all these events will be completed.

⁸As for me, I heard but could not understand; so I said, “My lord, what will be the outcome of these events?”

⁹He said, “Go your way, Daniel, for these words are concealed and sealed up until the end time. ¹⁰Many 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. ¹¹From the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days. ¹²How blessed is he who keeps waiting and attains to the 1,335 days! ¹³But as for you, go your way to the end; then you will enter into rest and rise again for your allotted portion at the end of the age.”

2. **The Separation.** Ultimately all will be resurrected, some to everlasting life, some to everlasting punishment. (v.2) [See 1 Th. 4:16; 1 Co. 15:51; Acts 24:15; Rev. 20:5]
3. **The Shining.** The spiritual elite in those times will not merely teach the meaning of signs of the time but will “lead the many to righteousness”, that is to foster the greater priority for spiritual faithfulness. (v.3) [See Mt. 13:37-43]
4. **The Sealing.** These things are sealed until the End Times occur. (v.4) [See Rev. 5:1]

Q: How does the order to “seal up the book” contrast with what John was commanded in Revelation?

A: In Rev. 22:10 John is commanded, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near”. They are sort of bookends to each other.

[Read 12:5-7]

Q: What is given as the length of the Great Tribulation?

A: 3-1/2 years or, according to the lunar calendar used in ancient times, 1,260 days.

Q: How does this compare with what we know about the timing and structure of the Tribulation?

A: The Tribulation is characterized by a seven year period consisting of two 3/1-2 year halves. It is generally thought that during the first half the Antichrist creates a false peace, then in the middle initiates the Abomination of Desolation. The second half is called “The Great Tribulation” to mark that period in which the judgment of God’s wrath and the most horrible of all events take place.

Q: What seems to be intimated about the greater purpose of Satan during the Great Tribulation?

A: He is focused on “shattering the power of the holy people”. (v.7) Earthly battles reflect the greater spiritual battles.

[Read 12:8-13]

Q: What seems to be intimated about God’s greater purpose during the Great Tribulation?

A: “Many will be purged, purified and refined”. (v.10) Whereas Satan is looking to defeat God’s people, God is looking to strengthen them.

Q: What is inferred in v.10 as the defining characteristic of “those who have insight”?

A: It is the opposite of those who will not understand: “the wicked”, which is biblically defined as those who are in rebellion against God’s Word and ways. Therefore “those who have insight” are those who are spiritually faithful, the ones who are putting God’s Word and ways into practice.

Point: In contrast to the wicked who in the End Times will act even more wickedly, the faithful will act even more faithfully in spite of the environment.

Q: What are the major time periods associated with the End Times?

1. 7 years.
2. 3-1/2 years or 1,260 days or 42 months.
3. 1,290 days or 1,260 + 30.

4. 1,335 days or 1,260 + 45

Q: What is the meaning of these time periods and their differences?

A: There are a myriad of books and websites dedicated to theories pertaining to these numbers, some of which seem plausible while others are tedious bordering on insanity. The most likely explanation at this point is that the meaning is still sealed up and yet to be clearly revealed by the Holy Spirit.

Q: How might the instructions to Daniel in v.9 be applied to any believer during any age?

A: It does not require that everything be understood when it comes to the End Times. For those who have come to faith in Christ, they have enough to sustain their faith whether or not they have the answer to every lingering question about God's prophetic plan.

Q: How does this fit with what follows in v.10?

A: It would seem that the greater work where Believers are concerned is the quality of their faithfulness more than the extent of their knowledge.

Application: *Being made pure – the biblical definition of “righteous” – is more important than being simply knowledgeable. It is the difference between those who are “hearers” of the Word versus “doers” of the Word.*

Q: How do v.9-10 dovetail with what John was also told in Revelation concerning people's behavior?

*"Let the one who does wrong, still do wrong; and the one who is filthy, still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and the one who is holy, still keep himself holy."
— Revelation 22:11*

Q: Why should v.13 be the ultimate comfort for all believers?

A: God's ultimate plan will be shared by every believer regardless of how things on earth turn out for them, whether they die in Christ or live to witness the events of these last years leading into the Millennial Reign.

Overall Application

Can you see that if God literally fulfilled His Word in the history of the ancient world, that what He has promised to do in these Last Days will plainly and literally also come true? But what is the greater work of believers living in the shadow of the Last Days? An even greater urgency to put God's Word and ways into practice so as to live a faithful life devoted exclusively to Christ and no other.