

All's Well That Ends Well

by Denis Lyle

The sermon emphasizes the importance of faithfulness to God and His will, as seen in the life of Daniel, and looks forward to the triumph of the faithful in the millennial kingdom.

Scripture: Revelation 22:10

Topics: "Faithfulness", "Prophecy"

Description

Denis Lyle preaches on the remarkable life of Daniel, a man of unwavering faith and godly character who rose to prominence in a foreign land through his dedication to honoring God. Despite facing trials, persecution, and prophecies of future troubles for his people, Daniel remained faithful and received divine revelations. The sermon delves into the sealing of the book of Daniel for preservation and future understanding, the dialogue Daniel overhears between angels discussing future events, the difficulties Daniel faced in comprehending the prophecies, and the destiny Daniel anticipated, including his responsibility in the present, his resurrection in the future, and his reward at the end of days.

Transcript

Reading: Daniel 12:1-13 ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL When Oliver Cromwell was sitting to have his portrait done, the artist asked him to cover the warts on his body. Cromwell replied, "Paint me warts and all". As we come to this concluding study on Daniel we have to say there weren't any warts on Daniel. He was an extraordinary man. Transported from his native Jerusalem to Babylon as a teenager, where he stayed for the rest of his life, exhibiting a godly character all the way through.

Daniel was a member of a foreign race, a captive people and yet he rose to the highest position in the State of Babylon. Daniel presided through three kingdoms and through four reigns. This mighty man Daniel ruled during the kingdom of Babylon and Medo-Persia, and during the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius and Cyrus. How did he manage to keep his head through all that time, and through all those changes By compromise No! By diplomacy No, not a bit of it. My, Daniel honoured God and God honoured Daniel, for the unchanging principle of Scripture is, "them that honour Me I will honour." (1 Sam 2:30) Can you see how far Daniel has come From Jerusalem to Babylon as a teenager.

In his youth he was uncompromising, "but Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the kings meat". (1:8) Do you recall that it was "this Daniel", who interpreted Nebuchadnezzars dream It was "this Daniel", who explained the writing on the wall It was Daniel who was thrown to the lions den It was Daniel who saw the course of Gentile world power and the "little horn", the

Antichrist of (Ch 7) It was to Daniel that there was given the amazing seventy weeks concerning Israel's future!

And now in these closing chapters (Ch 10... 12) he sees more trouble ahead for his people. My, can you imagine how overwhelmed this old man must have been by the scope of the revelations he had received War and rumour of war, kingdom rising against kingdom, nation against nation, bloodshed and persecution, terror and treachery. And it seemed that it was to go on and on, and his beloved people, Israel were to receive the brunt of it. Was there no hope Was there no help Bless God, there was for Daniel see's beyond the Tribulation to the day when "all Israel shall be saved". (Rom 11:26) "All's well that ends well", not only for Israel nationally but for Daniel personally, for in this closing verses of his prophecy we take our leave of Daniel as we see the old prophet going home, in the words of Old Testament Scripture, "yielding up the ghost and being gathered to his people". (Gen 49:33) Now I have divided our closing study into 4 parts this ...! (1) THE DIRECTION DANIEL RECEIVED Look at (12:4) In other words the angel was saying, " Daniel, there is no more information coming.

That's the last word. Put a full stop at the end of the book". Also, "make sure this book is preserved, because it is going to come into great meaning at a time in the future". Yes, Daniel was told to seal the book. In contrast to this, do you recall the message the angel gave John at the conclusion of the book of Revelation "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand". (Rev 22:10) John was told not to seal up his visions because their time of fulfilment was at hand.

Daniel's prophecy, however dealt with events so remote in the future that the meaning would be obscure until closer to the time. He was therefore told to seal the book. You see, (a) THE BOOK IS SEALED FOR PRESERVATION: The Hebrew phrase translated "shut up the words", speaks of preservation. "Book", refers to written material. The angel was telling Daniel that he had received the final words of this last revelation, covering Israel's history from Daniel's time to that of the Antichrist.

Since Daniel would receive no further revelation it was time to roll up the scroll and close it. Indeed this revelation was to be preserved until "the time of the end", referring to the time of the Great Tribulation! Now this doesn't mean that these messages are hid from us, only that they are safely preserved for those who come later... especially those living in the Great Tribulation! Today we obviously aren't in the Great Tribulation, but we can read and study the book of Daniel for ourselves.

It's likely that we can understand it better than Daniel did because we know the intervening history and have the book of Revelation and our Lord's commentary in (Matt 24 & 25) But the fullest understanding of Daniel will not come until the Great Tribulation. Now during that time the book of Daniel will be reopened and studied again by God's people. When they do so, they'll understand it as clearly as if they were reading the daily newspapers because all the events it foretells will be coming to pass around them.

So (a) and: (b) THE BOOK IS SEALED FOR INFORMATION: " Many shall run... increased". (12:4) Now this phrase has been a hot potato for many years among students of Bible prophecy. So many feel that this is a reference to world-wide travel, and if that is the correct interpretation of the passage then there is abundant evidence of its fulfilment. How could they tell me what's going on" Someone says, "Let me give you this book. It's the writing of an old prophet by the name of Daniel." So in the end times the Jewish people will want to find an explanation for the unfolding events.

They will engage in a painstaking pursuit. And when they come to the book of Daniel, their knowledge will be increased because they'll understand the reason for their suffering. Bible teacher, Leon Wood

paraphrases the verse like this: "Many shall run to and fro in their desire for knowledge of the last things, and finding it in Daniel's book, because it will have been preserved to the end, their knowledge shall be increased". My, an increased knowledge of the Scriptures in our crisis times would also provide folk the answers they so desperately seek.

Yet not that long ago an English clergyman recommended that Bible reading be banned for a year. He said, "The present situation regarding the Scriptures is intolerable. They represent an intellectual nightmare that cannot be removed until an almost completely new start is made with this most controversial document". Controversial document! Peter affirms that the Bible is "a light that shineth in a dark place". (2 Pet 1:9) My, to read and study the Word of God is to find comfort, help, and instruction in any age.

So the angel was saying to Daniel, "The content of the prophecy is sealed. At this present time any attempt to fully understand the future will be impossible, but in the end it will all become clear". The obvious question is, "When will the end be" Undoubtedly Daniel wanted to ask that question because he asks a similar one later in the chapter (12:8), but before he could do so, two angels asked first. For notice: (2) THE DIALOGUE DANIEL OVERHEARD Look at (12:5-7) Now keep in mind that the angels long message concerning Israel in "the latter days", has come to an end.

That has taken us from (11:2... 12:4) Daniel is standing alongside the Tigris River and as he looks he observes 3 persons one on either side of the river and one above the river. I take these to be two angels who were in conversation with the Lord Himself. Can you see from (12:6) that one of them asked: (a) THE CRUCIAL QUESTION: Apparently they were just as curious as Daniel about future events. Now can you picture this scene in your minds Here is Daniel near the Tigris River and he notices two things.

Firstly he notices: 1. The LOCATION of the Angels: They are on either side of the River but they were in a subordinate position by the edge of the River while the "man clothed in linen", was "upon the waters of the river". (12:6) So Daniel saw 1. Then he saw: 2. The ELEVATION of the Man: A man clothed in linen positioned over the River. Now (Ch 10) helps us identify this man. (10:4-6) This was the Lord of Glory, the second person of the Godhead. My, the man clothed in linen in (Ch 10) and the man clothed in linen in (Ch 12) are one and the same person.

The Preincarnate Christ, and the Lord Jesus was clothed in linen because that was the garment of the priesthood its white colour symbolising holiness and purity. (Exod 28:39-43) But did you notice the crucial question "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders" (12:6) They wanted to know about the "wonders", connected with the reign of the Antichrist. Their question was not concerned with the entire history from Daniel's day to that of the Antichrist but only with the conclusion of events.

The angels wanted to know when the Antichrist would be permitted to bring oppressive measures against Israel and how long that oppression would last. That was (a) But notice: (b) THE CLARIFYING ANSWER: Look at (12:7) My, do you see something of: 1. The SOLEMNITY of the Answer: Whenever a Jewish person would make an oath, he raised his right hand. We do that today when a person testifies in court raising his right hand and promising to tell the truth. That Christ raised both His hands emphasises the announcement of an absolutely binding affirmation.

He swore by His Father "who liveth forever". (1 Tim 6:16) 1. But look at: 2. The SUBSTANCE of the Answer: For it is twofold. For here the Lord Jesus touches upon: * The PERIOD of the Tribulation: "A time, times and a half..." (12:7) Now while the whole seven year period is called "The Tribulation", scholars

refer to the last half of the period as "The Great Tribulation". The Hebrew phrase translated "a time, times, and a half", means that the Antichrist's terror will last three and a half years. (7:25) The Antichrist will sign his pact with Israel and this will guarantee Israel's security for seven years.

This marks the beginning of the final "week", of the seventy weeks of Daniel (Ch 9) Halfway through the week, however Antichrist will tear up his treaty with the Jews, seize the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem, desecrate it with his image, following in the footsteps of his ancient type Antiochus Epiphanes and inaugurate that ruthless and relentless persecution of the Jews, the "Great Tribulation", to which (12:1) alludes! So the Lord Jesus * * The PURPOSE of the Tribulation: " To scatter the power of the holy people", or "to break up the power of the holy people". (12:7) The "holy people", are the Jewish people, still called by God, in spite of their sins as a nation over many centuries.

My, the Jews today are a small and scattered people, but they are a powerful people. Their influence in the world is enormous, out of all proportion to their numbers. They are a power to be reckoned with in the Middle East. During the first half of the Tribulation they will enjoy the favour of the Antichrist and will doubtless seek to extend their already great influence in the world. But in the middle of that period he will turn against them and break their power. His persecution against them will be unprecedented in history. (12:1) They will realise too late, that he has played them for fools, using them as pawns in a bigger game.

The final holocaust will break out and every man's hand will be against them. They will become fugitives and vagabonds on the earth, to be rounded up and shipped to the nearest concentration camp for extermination. But the Lord's intention is not to destroy his people, but to bring them to the point of brokenness so they look to their Messiah, "whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him as one mourneth for his only son". (Zech 12:10) Having nowhere to flee but into the loving arms of Christ after three and a half years of relentless persecution, Israel will accept Him as their Saviour and Lord.

My, God has not finished with the Jew. God has not forgotten them. God has not forsaken them. God has not written them out of His prophetic programme. Time will tell how He will bring them back to Himself, and that day cannot be very far distant. Now some of you, listening to me these Tuesday... have felt like Daniel, as you have gone through these studies. For did you notice how Daniel reacted when he heard all this. Look at what he says (12:8) "And I heard but I understood not".

Is that how you have felt some Tuesday evenings You see, this was: (3) THE DIFFICULTY DANIEL EXPERIENCED Having heard the answer to the angels question, Daniel was still confused. Now keep in mind that he did not have the insight of further revelation and history we do today. Look at: (a) THE DIFFICULTY EXPRESSED: Notice his words in (12:8) The tense of the Hebrew verb translated "understood", indicates that Daniel struggled to understand what had been said, but that understanding escaped him.

Now whereas the angels asked about the time and length of the persecution, it seems Daniel was more concerned about what kind of persecution his people would suffer. He knew Israel's affliction would be catastrophic, but he wanted specific detail about events that would take place. For instance, how severely would his people suffer before turning to the Messiah My, this was (a) But notice: (b) THE DIFFICULTY EXPLAINED: For Daniel's difficulty was answered by the Lord Jesus Himself!

Now the Lord gives him a fourfold answer. 1. The TIME of Fulfilment: For the Lord made it clear to Daniel that the time of the fulfilment of these events was at the end of the age! " Go thy way Daniel... time of the end". (12:9) Now this does not mean that the book of Daniel would remain closed as far as the study of it

was concerned but rather that the events disclosed in it would not be fulfilled until the time of the end. My, Daniel did not need to worry because God was in control, and these events were far in the future from Daniel's standpoint.

The revelation Daniel received will be preserved for Gods people in the future, and be a source of knowledge, comfort, and salvation to them. My, the Lord was telling Daniel to be content with what He had revealed, staying away from useless speculation. So often prophetic truth has been brought into disrepute by those who engage in useless speculation. My, lets accept what God has revealed, but not try to go any further. The doctrine of the Lords return is not a toy to play with: not a weapon to fight with, but rather a tool to build with!

Christians may disagree on some of the finer points of Bible prophecy, but we all believe that Jesus Christ is coming again to reward believers and judge the lost and we must live in the light of His coming! So the Lord spoke to Daniel about 1. 2. The TRIBULATION of Israel: For the fires of the Tribulation will separate the wise from the wicked. Do you see the contrast in (12:10) On the one hand you have got the WISE: "many shall be purified..." "You see, the sufferings of this future day will result in the cleansing of some.

Now it does not say that all will be purified but many. (Zech 13:8-9) The rest will die in unbelief. There will be the WISE, but there will be the WICKED: who will remain blind to the truth right to the end. My, the wicked won't understand the prophetic events as they unfold. They may even read the book of Daniel but they won't understand it because "the natural man does not understand the things of the Spirit of God". (1 Cor 2:14) The human mind no matter how sharp, cannot perceive God's truth apart from enlightenment by the Holy Spirit.

Now the Lord is still talking to Daniel, He talks to him about (1) (2) and now He speaks of: 3. The TEMPLE at Jerusalem: Look at (12:11) Now please notice that there are two events here. There is: * The ABOLITION of the Sacrificial System: "The daily sacrifice", is a reference to the daily sacrifices in the Temple at Jerusalem. * * The ABOMINATION of Desolation Set Up: Now the "abomination of desolation", means "the idol that causes desolation in the Temple". (Matt 24:15) You see, the Antichrist is going to make a seven year treaty with Israel allowing the Jewish people to worship in their Temple.

However, in the middle of that period the Antichrist will put an end to their worship when he desecrates the Temple and sets up an image of himself inside it. Then begins the fiery persecution known as the Great Tribulation. Now if there are two events here, I want you to notice that there are three time periods here. In (12:7) you have three and a half years 1260 days using months of 30 days. Then in (12:11) we have 1290 days, and then in (12:12) 1335 days. So you have got the initial period of 1260 days (three and a half years) to which is added another 30 days (one month) making a total of 1290 days to which is added another 45 days making a total of 1335 days.

Now let me tell you something very interesting. From the time Antiochus Epiphanes the Syrian King profaned the Temple in Jerusalem until the restoration of divine worship by Judas Maccabeus was 1290 days. And from that date to the death of Antiochus and the end of his persecutions was 1335 days! Now perhaps you're asking, "what about these extra 30 days in (12:11) I don't know, do you Perhaps it will take this extra month for the judgement of the nations. (Matt 25:31-46) Maybe you're asking, "will what about these extra 45 days in (12:12) I don't know... do you Leon Wood offers the following credible explanation.

He says "It may be the time necessary for setting up the governmental machinery for carrying on the rule of Christ. The true and full border of Israel from the River of Egypt to the Euphrates (Gen 15:18) will have

to be established, and appointments made of those aiding in the government. A period of 45 days would again seem to be reasonable in which to accomplish those matters". Now remember the Lord is still speaking to Daniel. He has spoken to him about 1. 2. 3. But now He speaks to him about: 4.

The TRIUMPH of the Faithful: Look at (12:12) This can be translated "Happy, happy is the one who... "My, the millennial kingdom will be worth waiting for. The Tribulation saints will enter the kingdom because they will have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. (Matt 25:34 rev 7:4 Rev 20:4) We also will be there returning with Christ at His second coming in our glorified bodies to reign in His kingdom. (Rev 19:14 Col 3:3 Is 59:20 Rom 11:26) My, what will make it so blessed to live during the Millennium Well: * Christ will be ruling: (Ps 2:6) * Satan will be captive: (Rev 20:1) * Truth will dominate: (Is 11:9) * Righteousness will flourish: (Ps 72:7) * Peace will reign: (Is 2:4) * Joy will abound: (Is 12:3-4) * Justice will pervade: (Is 11:3-4) King Edward the Seventh once graced with his presence for the first time a session of the Society of British Artists.

He asked the President, "what is the history of this society" Without a moments hesitation the President replied, "It begins today when your Majesty condescends to visit us". So for this coming kingdom we may say, "It will commence with the coming of the King". My, Daniel has been brought a long way. From his day to the day when Christ shall reign. Daniel's own days, were drawing to a close, however, and so the Lord turned to him personally with a final word, "But go... the days". (12:13) Thats: (4) THE DESTINY DANIEL ANTICIPATED My, can you this old man 90 years of age, who after living most of his life in a pagan land was still godly: courageous: prayerful, humble, uncompromising, zealous and compassionate Now hes standing on the threshold of eternity, the Lord is speaking to him about: (a) HIS RESPONSIBILITY IN THE PRESENT: " But go thou way till the end be...

"(12:13) The Lord was just telling Daniel to remain faithful to his Word and will. Thats similar to an admonition Christ would give centuries later, "Occupy till I come." (Lk 19:13) The apostle Peter put it like this, "Seeing then all these things shall be dissolved what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness". (2 Pet 3:11) My, knowledge of the future brings a present responsibility to live righteously. (b) HIS RESURRECTION IN THE FUTURE: " For thou shalt rest and stand...

"(12:13) Death would overtake Daniel and he would rest. Time would pass. The things he had seen and heard would be fulfilled. Empires would rise and fall. The Christ would come only to be cut off. The ages would pass. The Antichrist would come. The Messiah would come again. Yes, Daniel would rest in death, but that was by no means all for him, for he would stand in resurrection. (c) HIS REWARD IN THE END: " And stand in thy lot at the end of the days". (12:13) The Hebrew term translated "lot", refers to an inheritance. (Col 1:12 1 Pet 1:4) Daniel would enter into his reward and have his share in the glories yet to come. (12:3) He whose name means "God is my judge", will find Him to be the righteous judge. (2 Tim 4:8) Thus, abruptly the book of Daniel ends.

A father was awakened in the night by his little boy. Apparently the child was having a nightmare and panicked, crying out for his Daddy. As the father ran into the dark room, the boy asked, "Daddy, are you here" "Yes, son, I'm here", the father said reassuringly. "Daddy", said the boy, "is your face looking at me" The father answered, "Yes, son." With those words the boy lost his fear and soon fell asleep. My, our great hope for the future is knowing that at the face of our Saviour is looking at us.

There is no need to fear the future because He is looking at us with the same love that He had for Daniel. * Our Past is Forgiven: Christ Redeeming! * Our Future is Secure: Christ Returning! * Our Present is

Blessed:... Christ Reigning! For the theme of the book is this, "there is a God in heaven", "the Most High ruleth". And My, "this God is our God for ever and ever: He will be our guide unto death". (Ps 48:14) Several years ago after I ministered one night at the Bible Class in the Iron Hall, my dear friend and colleague Leslie Armstrong went home and wrote these words about, "The God of Daniel".

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