

Here Comes the Son

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[0 : 00] Amy is going to read all of chapter 12, and she's going to be using the Numeric and Standard version. That's what you'll see on the screen. And so if you're using a different version, that's entirely okay.

Follow along in your own Bible or else follow along on the screen with Amy as she reads to us Daniel chapter 12. 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. Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.

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. But 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. 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.

[1 : 07] And 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? I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, as he raised his right hand and his left towards 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. As for me, I heard but could not understand. So I said, My Lord, what will be the outcome of these events?

He said, Go your way, Daniel, for these words are concealed and sealed up until the end of time. 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.

From the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days. How blessed is he who keeps waiting and attains to the 1,335 days.

But 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. Thanks, Amy. There is value in positive thinking.

[2 : 27] Paul tells the Colossians, Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

And Paul tells the Philippians to think about whatever is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, excellent, and worthy of praise.

So there is some value in positive thinking. Kids, I wonder if you know how to make a grimacing face.

Do you know what a grimace looks like? It looks like this. Can you all do that? Yeah, it's like that. Very good.

I suspect that many of us grimace at least a little bit when someone says, Please send positive thoughts and prayers my way.

[3 : 26] Why do we grimace? Why do we cringe at this? Because we understand that positive thinking does not change our circumstances. And we also understand that good vibes don't relieve pain.

It is fun to sing, Life is a highway. But isn't it true that more often than not, life feels like a traffic jam?

There is a certain terror of knowing what this world is all about. And maybe like me, you have even screamed, Let me out.

Maybe we didn't start the fire. And yet it's not hard to look around and realize that this world is burning, isn't it? Go ahead.

Think pleasant thoughts like, Here comes the sun. But I wonder, can you really say that it is all right? The sun will come up tomorrow.

[4 : 31] But there are just no guarantees about what tomorrow will look like, are there? What if your life gets worse before it gets better?

What if grief hangs heavy on your shoulders? Like one of those rice packs that you put in the microwave and you warm it up and you put it on your shoulders and it feels heavy there.

What if sickness pops in unexpectedly and then doesn't leave? What if depression makes you unable to say, I will survive?

What if you face persecution and shame for the name of Jesus Christ? I hope to convince you of this today.

That suffering has a hard stop coming. So be wise until the end. I hope that we will notice in Daniel chapter 12, five contrasts between the wise and the foolish.

[5 : 40] And that we will also find four practical applications for how we can be wise in these days in which we live. But in order to understand the context of what our sister Amy just read for us, we need to back up into chapter 11.

Now, I know some of you who are not history people are going to grimace about this. But before you grimace too much about backing up into chapter 11, I'll just give you this.

I promise we're only dipping our toes. We are not taking a deep dive again into chapter 11. Towards the end of chapter 11, this is what we notice. That the text no longer describes Antiochus Epiphanes.

Instead of describing a specific ruler, it seems to be describing a type of ruler. A category of ruler. Antiochus has become the model or the paradigm for all future leaders.

Who elevate themselves above God and persecute God's people. So we should not be surprised when world rulers are arrogant and foolish and ruthless.

[6 : 53] They are following in the footsteps of Antiochus. And the man dressed in linen told us that it would be like this. We can expect that the pride of kings and rulers and presidents and prime ministers will be a bloated kind of pride.

Like Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar and Antiochus. And we can expect this pride to continue until. Until a final ruler.

Takes their God rejection. To an extreme level. Do you like extreme sports? Like to watch like the X Games where they do all kinds of crazy stunts.

And compete for who can do the most twists and flips and tricks. I was reading a bit about the X Games. And I didn't even know this was a thing. And I had to look it up. Apparently.

And it's been a while apparently. Apparently you can take a forward flip coming off of a ramp. Forward flip. I get a backward flip.

[7 : 59] I think like backward flipping your snowmobile. But apparently there are people who can take a front flip off of a snowmobile. And land the snowmobile. This is extreme.

But I think my favorite one is the motocross. The freestyle motocross. This is on the BMX bikes. Like motorcycle bikes. And they jump off of a ramp with their motorbike.

And then they do all kinds of crazy things. Like let go of the bike and pretend like there's Superman flying. Before they grab it again to land the trick. These are extreme games.

And that's why they call them the X Games. One future ruler. Often called the Antichrist. Antichrist will take Antiochus' God-spurning attitude to Guinness world record levels.

And he will be recognized. Daniel writes for us. The man dressed in linen tells us this. He will be recognized by four things. One, autonomy.

[9 : 03] This is no surprise. This has been the crux of the conflict since the Garden of Eden. Second, the serpent's temptation to be like God is just too juicy, isn't it?

Second, he will be known by blasphemy. He won't show any loyalty to the religion of his parents. And he will say shockingly awful things about God.

Third, he will be known by his inhumanity. A true, beastly person like we looked at earlier in Daniel. He will have a calloused disregard for human life.

And finally, he will be power hungry. In fact, war will be his only religion. Authority is his God. He will give up everything and beat down everyone else until he is the king of the mountain.

And when he is king, those who want to be on his good side will pay with their submission. Look again, chapter 11 and verse 36.

[10 : 14] And the king shall do as he wills. He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods.

He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished. For what is decreed shall be done. He shall pay no attention to the gods of his fathers or to the one beloved by women.

He shall not pay attention to any other god. For he shall magnify himself above all. He shall honor the God of fortresses instead of these.

A God whom his fathers did not know. He shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts. He shall deal with the strongest fortresses with the help of a foreign god.

And those who acknowledge him, he shall load with honor. He shall make them rulers over many and shall divide the land for a price.

[11 : 14] It seems like the Antichrist is large and in charge, doesn't it? But I want you to notice how irrelevant he seems at the end of chapter 11.

Look at verse 45. For all of his arrogant autonomy. For all of his blasphemous behavior. For all of his irreverent inhumanity.

For all of his power-hungry posturing. The Antichrist. And all of the suffering that he causes. Has a hard stop.

Look at verse 45. And he shall pitch his palatial tents between the sea and the glorious holy mountain. Yet, he shall come to his end.

With none to help him. Hard stop. Hard stop. For suffering. Caused by the Antichrist. Verse 1.

[12 : 23] At that time shall arise Michael. The great prince. Who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble.

Such as never has been. Since there was a nation until that time. But at that time. Your people shall be delivered. Everyone whose name shall be found.

Written in the book. This time in earth's history. Just after the Antichrist. It will be marked by trouble.

Adversity. Oppression. Persecution. Death. These will be universal realities for all people. But some. Some.

Will be delivered. Do you see that? Who will be delivered? Those who are written in the book. Is your name written in God's book? Dear friend.

[13 : 21] Foolishness ignores this question. Wisdom seeks an answer. This is the first contrast in chapter 12. There will be trouble for all.

But deliverance for some. Here's the second contrast. Resurrection for many. And eternal life for some. Look at verse 2. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth.

Shall awake. Some to everlasting life. And some to shame. And everlasting contempt. Resurrection for many.

But only some get eternal life. Some get everlasting contempt. During this time of extreme trouble.

Many will chase after knowledge. And understanding. But here's the third contrast. Those who are wise. Those who are wise. Will shine like the sun.

[14 : 26] Look at verse 3. And those who are wise. Will shine like the brightness of the sky above. And those who turn many to righteousness.

Like the stars forever and ever. But you Daniel. Shut up the words. And seal the book. Until the end of time. Many shall run to and fro.

And knowledge shall increase. Many running to and fro. Increasing knowledge. This reminds me of how we use the idiom. Like a chicken running around with its head cut off.

That's what I think about at the end of this verse. Many just running around. Scurrying around. To and fro. Gathering. Storing up knowledge and information. And yet.

The wise are the ones who shine. Like the sun. The man dressed in linen.

[15 : 27] Who I believe to be the pre-incarnate son of God. Has given this revelation to Daniel since chapter 10. And now he directs Daniel to ensure that this revelation that he has received.

Is safe and preserved. Aren't you grateful that Daniel obeyed? That he saw to it. That the revelation that he had received. Was written down and preserved and kept safe.

So that we could have it until today. How faithful of Daniel. To be obedient to the words of Jesus. There's a fourth contrast.

It comes a few verses later. Many will purify themselves. But the wicked will act wickedly. Look at verse number 10.

Many shall purify themselves. And make themselves white. And be refined. But the wicked shall act wickedly.

[16 : 30] And none of the wicked shall understand. But those who are wise shall understand. Suffering sanctifies.

The fire of adversity. Forges faith. Like fine steel.

This is the contrast that is set up here. A refining. Happening. In those who believe in God.

One final contrast shows up there. At the end of verse 12. Or at the end of verse 10. Despite this increasing knowledge.

The wicked will not be able to make sense. Of this time of trouble. It will be utterly confusing. And shocking. And disorienting to them. But. Jesus tells us.

- [17 : 32] That the wise will understand. What is it that the wise will understand? Do the wise have to understand everything taking place in the last half of Daniel?
- And the book of Ezekiel? And the whole of the revelation? Is that what we. The wise need to understand? I hope not. We're in big trouble aren't we? If we have to know all of that with perfect clarity.
- What is it that the wise will understand? The wise will understand that for those who love God. For those who are called according to his purpose.
- All things work together for good. Even this time of trouble. Persecution. And death.
- All things work together for good. Even the most intense suffering. And the greatest trouble. Like this world has never experienced. What is God's purpose at the end of time?
- [18 : 30] What is God's purpose in all of this? His purpose is bringing all suffering to a hard stop. Someone asks the son of God.
- How long? When? When will this happen? When will you bring an end to all of the suffering? Read with me at verse number five.
- Then I Daniel looked. And behold. Two others stood. One on this bank of the stream. And one on that bank of the stream. And someone said to the man clothed in linen.
- Who was above the waters of the stream. How long? Shall it be. Shall it be. Till the end. Of these wonders.
- And I heard the man clothed in linen. Who was above the waters of the stream. He raised his right hand. And his left hand. Toward heaven. And swore by him who lives forever.
- [19 : 33] That it would be for a time. Times. And half a time. And that when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end. All of these things would be finished.
- Do you see this? If this is the son of God. And I believe it is. Jesus. Pre-incarnate. Before he became flesh and came to earth. Here is Jesus.
- Swearing an oath. Before God the father. Remember. That suffering. Has a hard stop coming. Times.
- Time. Times. And half a time. That's the hard stop that's coming. For suffering. Verse nine. Sorry.
- Verse eight. I heard. But I did not understand. Anybody else? Yep. I heard.
- [20 : 31] But I did not understand. Then I said. Oh my Lord. What shall be the outcome of these things? What will be the outcome of these things?
- What does the end look like? He said. Go your way Daniel. For the words are shut up and sealed. Until the end of time.
- Verse 11. And from the time. That the regular burnt offering is taken away. And the abomination that makes desolate is set up. There shall be 1290 days.
- Blessed is he who waits and arrives at the 1335 days. But go your way till the end. And you shall rest.
- And shall stand in your allotted place. At the end of the days. Just when we are beginning to think. That we have dipped our toes.
- [21 : 29] Enough into chapter eight. And chapter 11. And we're starting to kind of get a little perspective. And a little feel for this. Jesus drops this bomb. Time, times, and half a time on us.
- And then he gives us this 1290 days. Or is it 1335 days? I wish I could offer a better explanation. But I think the best answer to how long really is God knows.
- There is a timeline. God knows it. And Jesus himself swears to it.

I feel pretty good about that timeline. I don't know how long the timeline is. But I know that suffering has a hard stop coming. Jesus promises.

With an oath. Before God. That's pretty good. Suffering. Will not last one moment longer than God purposes.

[22 : 28] Jesus will return. And he will not delay. Like parents leaving church on Sunday morning. Jesus will not abide one second more of separation from his bride.

Than the father determines is best. It's possible. That someday we will look back and say. Aha. That is what the 1290 and the 1335 meant.

But it will only be with the context of history. That this revelation will become more clear. Those who are wise.

Understand this. What does wisdom look like practically. While we wait for the return of Jesus.

Well first. Wisdom looks like being realistic. In verse 7. Jesus teaches us that God's people will often appear.

[23 : 38] Down and out. Defeated. Broken. Scripture uses the word shattered. Don't be surprised when the powers of darkness do their worst to the children of light.

Expect this. Be realistic. Wisdom is not pessimistic. Wisdom is realistic.

Second. We should be hopeful. Jesus reveals in verse 1. That this. In this time of awful trouble. God's people are guarded.

Protected. By no one less than the archangel Michael. I feel good about that. I don't know about you. I feel good about being guarded and protected. By the archangel Michael.

And even those of us who may die in faith. Have the hope. Of a resurrection to eternal life. When you see his face.

[24 : 41] And you're a believer. There will not be a trace of doubt in your mind. I promise. Wisdom is realistic.

Wisdom is hopeful. Third. Wisdom is faithful. When Daniel asks for more clarity in verse number 8. Because he doesn't understand.

Jesus says to him. Go your way. Don't you worry about what or when or how. You just be happy that all of this is according to God's plan and timeline.

Go your way. And be faithful where you are. And you will rest. And enter into your inheritance at the end of days. What a promise. What a promise.

Don't fret and worry about how long. Don't be consumed to know what the end has to look like. Go your way. And be faithful. This is wisdom.

[25 : 39] At the end of days. Jesus' words here in Daniel remind me of his words in John. This is John 14 and verse 1. Let not your hearts be troubled.

Believe in God. Believe also in me. In my father's house are many rooms. If it were not so. Would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go.

And prepare a place for you. I will come again. And will take you to myself. That where I am. There you may be also. Go your way Daniel.

Be faithful where you are. And you will rest. And enter into your inheritance. Fourth and finally.

Be bold. Be bold. Look back at verse number 3. And those who are wise. Will shine like the brightness of the sky above.

[26 : 40] And those who turn many to righteousness. Like the stars forever and ever. Don't be afraid to speak the gospel follower of Jesus.

What can they do to you? Throw you in a fire? Here. He'll be with you. Cast you into the lion's den. He will not abandon you there.

Maybe governments and rulers and presidents and prime ministers and even popular culture. Make following Jesus painful. God's angel Michael is stronger than all of them.

Every follower of Jesus will be vindicated in the end. So shine like the light of the world. Let them hear Christ.

The wisdom of God. From the people of God. Be bold. Let them hear it. Wisdom is realistic.

[27 : 43] Wisdom is hopeful. Wisdom is faithful. And wisdom is bold. Daniel begins with tragedy.

Jerusalem is destroyed. The temple is looted. The people exiled to a foreign land. But their God-given wisdom catches the attention of King Nebuchadnezzar.

God shakes this tyrant's world with a dream that he cannot remember or else will not repeat. And his best and brightest wise men are unable to reveal or explain it.

But through prayer, Daniel receives God's answer to what ails the king. God's wisdom is revealed. Making foolish the wisdom of the world.

But the king rejects God's revelation. And he demands that the entire world follow him in his foolishness. The music plays.

[28 : 52] And the crowd, minus three, mindlessly bows. We know God is able to deliver us. We believe our God will deliver us.

But even if we must go into the fire, you need to know, O King, we will not serve your gods. And again, God vindicates the wisdom of his saints by sending the sun to be with them in and to deliver them from the burning fiery furnace.

God will not tolerate this king's foolishness. And in mercy, he warns him of coming judgment. He even sends his servant Daniel, who boldly shines like the sun, calling the king to repent, to do good to the oppressed, to show compassion.

And again, in a gift of amazing grace, this king is humbled and turns to righteousness.

A blasphemous king follows. God warns him also of impending judgment. But rather than everlasting life, his end comes quickly in humiliating shame and everlasting contempt.

[30 : 15] One final story follows, showing how rulers will often put themselves in God's place, demanding that people pray to them, bow to them, and not to God.

And again, God vindicates Daniel's faithfulness by muzzling the mouths of lions. Next came the visions of the future.

God's people can expect persecution, terroristic threats, wars. We are not surprised by the instability of earthly kingdoms, nor the arrogant posturing of their rulers.

We may find, we may, in our lifetimes, witness this one ruler who takes their God rejection to the extreme and claim to be God himself.

Death may come for us, brothers and sisters, but death cannot have us. Like those who faced the furnace and the lions, you and I may face certain death, but we need not face death with any kind of uncertainty.

[31 : 31] These are the words of Jesus from Matthew 24. Immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man, the cloud rider from Daniel chapter 7, the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, and he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other.

You may face certain death, but you need not face death with any uncertainty. At the end of days, when hope vanishes into darkness, the Father will say, here comes the Son.

And then all of God's people will affirm, and it's all right. It's all right. The Son has come.

But until then, until we enter into our imperishable, undefiled, and unfading inheritance that is certainly being kept for us by our Father in heaven, let's ask God for wisdom to be faithful right here in a foreign land.

[33 : 11] Let's pray. Good Father, we are grateful for your word. We are so grateful that Daniel was obedient to the command of Jesus to preserve, to seal up this word, to preserve it so that no one could find it and destroy it so that this word to us in the book of Daniel could be a comfort and encouragement so that we could look at these stories of the heroes of our faith and observe how they lived faithful to you, even in a foreign land, and we could strive by the power of the Holy Spirit and your good, sufficient grace to us to be like them.

Thank you for the end of the book of Daniel and though we confess, we only understand just the scratched surface of all that you have to say to us here.

we rest and we trust in the promise, the oath that Jesus has made, that suffering, even the worst of suffering that may yet come in our lifetimes, even that worst of suffering has a hard stop coming because Jesus has made a promise.

we rest in this promise. We are hopeful because of this promise. We eagerly anticipate the return of our Savior, Jesus Christ, in power and great glory.

We long to see the cloud rider and to see him set all things right. until then, please guard us by your Holy Spirit.

[35 : 00] Encourage us by the preaching of the gospel. Give us courage to be bold as we proclaim this message that Christ saves sinners, that the bloody death of our Savior on the cross is the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Please help us to be faithful. It is in the name of our Savior, the Lord Jesus, that we pray. Amen.