

THE TIME IS AT HAND!

In Daniel 12 God showed Daniel the reality of various end time events in relation to his people – the Jews. In Daniel 12:7 it was explained that when “the power of the holy people [Jews] has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished.” Daniel still had questions...

Daniel 12:8 (NKJV)

Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, “My lord, what shall be the end of these things?”

Daniel was still puzzled. Daniel wanted more information for further clarity.

Daniel 12:9 (NKJV)

And he said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

Go your way: In effect, God says, “Be satisfied with what I have shown you. You don’t need to know more at this point. It will be understood more fully at the appropriate time for those who will need to know at that time.” It is not a rebuke, but instruction.

The words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

When is this time? Well, I think there is a certain level of application for NOW. Ever since the first coming of Christ we have been living in the last days (Heb. 1:1-2). We are those “upon whom the ends of the ages have come” (1 Cor. 10:11). But in a **more pronounced way this has special application to the Jews and saints during the Tribulation Period.** In the most technical sense, the time of the end refers to the 70th week of Daniel that will usher in the Second Coming.

Daniel is the basis for the Book of Revelation. Daniel gives the broad outline, but Revelation fills in many details. Daniel is said to be a closed and sealed book and it was in the Old Testament. The Old Testament saints (including Daniel), did not understand very much of it.

However, as history began to unfold, it was easy to see many of the prophecies of Daniel literally being fulfilled. The Babylonian Empire was followed by Medo-Persian, by Greece, and then by Rome (cf. Daniel 2 & 7).

This is now history. The terrible man, the type of Antichrist prophesied in Daniel 8 and 11 is now history as seen in the person of Antiochus Epiphanes.

The book of Zechariah (c. 480 B.C.) written after Daniel (c. 530 B.C) provided more detail and gave more insight into the broad outline of Daniel. Jesus added to it in the Olivet Discourse of Matthew 24-25.

However, the biggest factor in opening up our understanding is the Book of Revelation. Whereas Daniel was a closed and sealed book related to the distant future, the Book of Revelation says the time is near and that it is a book not to be sealed. Daniel was sealed but the book of Revelation is NOT!

Revelation 1:3 (NKJV)

3 Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.

Revelation 22:6 (NKJV)

6 Then he said to me, "These words are faithful and true." And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place.

Revelation 22:10 (NKJV)

10 And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.

Revelation, building on Daniel, OPENS up our understanding in a way that was unknown in Old Testament times.

Interestingly, some have criticized "dispensationalism" on the basis that only in the last couple of hundred years have people come to have this theological understanding from the Scriptures. "Dispensationalism" emphasizes that God's distinct plan for the Church is in contrast to His plan for Israel. Right now God is building the church, but following the rapture of the Church He will finish His program for Israel.

The fact is Daniel says at the time of the end understanding will increase. They will put the pieces of the puzzle together in a way that previously they were not able to do.

1 Corinthians 10:11 (NKJV)

11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

1 Peter 4:7 (NKJV)

7 But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers.

The book is no longer a CLOSED BOOK in this regard. We no longer have to wait for the distant future for the truth to be opened to us. We are those in close proximity to the end. It has been **hovering over us** for the duration of the Church Age (Heb. 1:1-2).

Note the Bible speaks **prophetically** in relation to the time being at hand. Prophecy often speaks thematically to the next related event that is in view. In other words, in the Old Testament, from Daniel's viewpoint, a large GAP/PARENTHESIS period (unknown to him) stood between him and the Tribulation Period and other end time events.

However, in the Church Age, the Tribulation Period is always but a "**Shout**" **away** (cf. 1 Thess. 4:16-17). The Church at some point will be instantly removed and then the next thing on God's prophetic calendar following the Church Age is the seven year tribulation. The RAPTURE has **prophetic immediacy** and could happen at any time which was not true in Daniel's day. That is why the angel in Rev. 22:10 said, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is AT HAND." (emphasis mine)

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PERHAPS TODAY!

LIVE READY!