



# Potomac Hills

## Presbyterian Church, PCA

By Grace Alone ~ Through Faith Alone ~ In Christ Alone

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Daniel 12:1-13

April 9, 2009 (Easter)  
English Standard Version

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### *“Resurrection Hope”*

This is the 14<sup>th</sup> sermon in the series on the book of Daniel entitled,  
*“A Broken World and a Sovereign God.”*

#### **Daniel 12:1-13**

*“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 till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book. <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. <sup>4</sup> But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”*

*<sup>5</sup> Then I, Daniel, looked, and behold, two others stood, one on this bank of the stream and one on that bank of the stream. <sup>6</sup> And someone said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the stream, “How long shall it be till the end of these wonders?” <sup>7</sup> 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 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 these things would be finished. <sup>8</sup> I heard, but I did not understand. Then I said, “O my lord, what shall be the outcome of these things?” <sup>9</sup> He said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end. <sup>10</sup> Many shall purify themselves and make themselves white and be refined, but the wicked shall act wickedly. And none of the wicked shall understand, but those who are wise shall understand. <sup>11</sup> And from the time that the regular burnt offering is taken away and the abomination that makes desolate is set up, there shall be 1,290*

days. <sup>12</sup> *Blessed is he who waits and arrives at the 1,335 days.* <sup>13</sup> *But go your way till the end. And you shall rest and shall stand in your allotted place at the end of the days.*”

*Heavenly Father, we have come to Your Word again this Easter and we find that we need wisdom and understanding. Lord, once again open our ears to truly hear. And we ask that by the power of the Holy Spirit, this Word would be a great encouragement to stand firm in a fallen and broken world. Give us the grace to believe and give us hope in the coming of Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Do this for each of us, this morning, in His name, and for His glory, Amen.*

### **INTRODUCTION: *Fix it!***

When our oldest son was young ... very young ... about two-years-old [don't worry — I already gave him a dollar] he liked eating cheese. In specific, he liked Kraft American Singles, which was American cheese processed into individually wrapped slices — they still sell them — they're a staple of grilled cheese sandwiches. However, this time, when David tried to open the individually wrapped slice of American cheese ... he accidentally tore it in half.

**Being two** ... this unleashed a torrent of tears ... accompanied by the desperate plea of “Mommy, fix it.” Mom tried to explain that it's really hard to fix a torn slice of cheese ... which only resulted in another torrent of tears. **He thought** she could tape it together ... and she tried to gently explain that scotch tape and cheese don't really work well together.

I was a big help ... in my most sympathetic voice [when I wasn't laughing] ... I said something to the effect of ... “Dude, just eat it.” Which got more tears from my son and one of those “**Mom Looks**” from you know who. Yeah, you've gotten that look before. In the end, David got a new slice of cheese, which Mom carefully unwrapped for him ... Mom got the old torn slice of cheese ... and I got zippo, nada, nothing ... “no cheese for you.”

I was reminded of that incident, because truth be told, the expectations of two-year-olds have become the expectations of the world in which we live.

We live in an age in which we expect everything to be fixable. There's a pervasive air of pragmatism in our society, born out of a generation steeped in the notion that if every morning you just repeat the saying, “In every way and every day I'm getting better and better,” then surely you will.

If your teeth aren't straight, orthodontics will set them right. If you don't like your body shape, and aren't, can't, won't go the diet and exercise route, then try cosmetic surgery. If your job frustrates you, look for a new opportunity to fulfill your potential. If you can't get along with your husband, wife, boyfriend, girlfriend, best friend ... **then get a new one**. Whatever our problem is, we've been trained to believe that someone out there has the answer that will **fix it**.

Just the other night on the Nightly News, there was a report on how difficult the job market is for those graduating from college last year and this year. And they made the statement that this generation of college graduates is having trouble taking “**NO**” for an answer, since this is the generation where everyone who played got a trophy. And since they viewed college as playing the game, and a job after graduation as the trophy, they're struggling with the fact that in real life, not everyone gets a trophy. And now they want someone to **fix it**.

And this is true on a national and global scale as well as a personal scale. Whether the problem is global warming, world poverty, oppressive regimes, collapsing markets, whatever ... we think we can **fix it**. Perhaps we don't have the solutions to all the world's problems worked out yet, but just give us a few more years and we'll surely figure it out. Just stop and say hi to

any two people talking in coffee shop and they'll tell you that they're "solving the world's problems."

And it doesn't matter if you're a liberal or a conservative: to keep to the stereotypes — liberals think that more government money and intervention will solve things, while conservatives think that more capitalism, less regulation, and more personal freedom will do the job. And in different ways, both are right and both are wrong. The idea that **evil** is **intractable** and **powerful**, with deep roots and sharp claws, and that no amount of education, activism, or democratic reform will ever eliminate it, **is distinctly countercultural**.

The same attitude of pragmatism has affected evangelical churches as well. Encouraged by well-meaning Christian counselors who believe, but don't actually use, the Bible, and Christian political action committees, and Christian church-growth consultants ... we too have come to believe that whatever is broken, we can **fix it**. Just buy this book, vote for these people, come to this conferences, start this program, pray this prayer, **and everything will turn out just fine**. You too can be slim, healthy, and sin-free in six weeks by following these seven simple steps to success. Therefore, if you haven't attained perfection yet, then evidently there's something wrong with you! It's clearly **your fault** for failing to take advantage of all that resources available to you at your local Christian bookstore.

I have some choice words for that kind of thinking, but if I used them in church, it would probably wind up involving both soap and repentance. Spiritual growth, being made holy, is not a **technique** to be learned and mastered. That may work for your golf swing, but it won't further your sanctification.

Real life, however, doesn't always match the latest fads or theories. The apocalyptic parts of the Bible, like the Book of Daniel, remind us that we live in a world **that simply cannot be fixed**. It needs to be **re-created**. There is **no doubt** that God will eliminate all evil in the end, but sin and sickness will be defeated according to **His timetable**, not ours. In the end, the broken will be made whole and tears will all be wiped away. But until the final coming of God's kingdom, brokenness and suffering and pain and persecution will continue to be **the norm** for believers. We live in a world that is profoundly broken.

This has been the message of the Book of Daniel from the beginning and it's still its focus as the book draws to a close. Remember, this closing chapter is part of God's answer to Daniel's prayers in the third year of Cyrus. God's people had returned to Jerusalem but found their efforts to rebuild the temple frustrated by a powerful and entrenched opposition. As a result, they fell into despair.

**And yet they had the promises of God.**

The Prophet **Isaiah** had said, **Isaiah 65:17-19**, "*For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind.*<sup>18</sup> *But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness.*<sup>19</sup> *I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in My people; no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress.*"

And the Prophet **Jeremiah**, writing about the time after the exile, said this, **Jeremiah 31:33**, "*But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put My law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be My people.*"

The Prophet **Ezekiel**, also writing about the time after the exile, said, **Ezekiel 36:26-27**, "*And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the*

*heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup> And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes and be careful to obey My rules.”*

When were all these great promises going to be fulfilled? The people had returned to Jerusalem, but it seemed that not much had changed. **Internally**, they still wrestled with the same sins as they had before, and **externally**, they still faced the same trials and problems as before. How long before their expectation of **real change** would happen? How long would they remain broken people?

This is a message that we need to hear today. Especially since our own progress in spiritual growth is slow and difficult, or when we face powerful opposition and persecution for the sake of the gospel. We live in a world where church services are interrupted by crazed gunmen who shoot to kill; a world where innocent children are abducted; a world where cancer attacks without discrimination, leaving both believers and unbelievers in excruciating pain for which they have **no** reasons and **no** answers.

The long-term effects of dysfunctional childhoods and sinful patterns of behavior continue to bear bitter fruit in our lives, in our marriages, and in our families, even for those of us who have followed Christ for many years. We still find obedience to God’s Word **hard**, while sin is constantly **attractive**, and we cry out for God to take this situation and **fix it**.

How do we live as broken people in a broken world? Should we given in to despair and assume that things will always be this bad? Should we just seek to anesthetize our pain through whatever pleasures we can find in this world, looking to make the best of a bad hand?

Not at all. The Book of Daniel should serve as a wake-up call for each of us to live with **wisdom** in this broken world. We should be pursuing the means of grace with all our hearts, devoting ourselves increasingly to **prayer**, to **God’s Word**, to worship and the **sacraments** as much as we can. However, at the same time, we need to recognize that even as we grow in grace, we continue to be people who are **profoundly** broken, living in a world that’s **profoundly** broken.

The Book of Daniel never assumes that we would find living in a world like this to be **easy**. On the contrary, it anticipates that we would be crying out, **“How long, O Lord?”** And that’s the question Daniel 12 is designed to address.

And so, with that in mind, let’s finish our study of the Book of Daniel, which is teaching us about, **“A Broken World and a Sovereign God.”** However, just to keep you paying attention, we’re going to start with verse 4 and find out ...

#### **v. 4: WHAT DO WE NEED? <sup>1</sup>**

*“But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”*

The foundational obligation upon us to live as God’s people in this broken world is to **be wise**. According to Daniel 12, there are only two kinds of people in the world, the **wise** and the **wicked**. This isn’t the normal pairing of these words. We tend to think that the opposite of “wicked” is “righteous,” but here its wisdom and understanding that distinguishes God’s people from the wicked.

Nor is it simply the **pursuit** of wisdom that marks God’s people, here we see that in

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<sup>1</sup> Part of the Introduction, the Exposition of the text, Application, and Conclusion are adapted from *Daniel: Reformed Expository Commentary* by Dr. Ian Duguid, pages 209-223; *The NIV Application Commentary: Daniel* by Dr. Tremper Longman, pages 283-306; *ESV Study Bible*, Daniel study notes by Dr. Duguid and Dr. Paul Wegner.

contrast to the wicked; God's people actually **achieve** wisdom. So we see at the end of verse 4, *"Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase."*

This is an allusion to **Amos 8:11-12**, which says, *"Behold, the days are coming," declares the Lord God, "when I will send a famine on the land— not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. <sup>12</sup> They shall wander from sea to sea, and from north to east; they shall run to and fro, to seek the word of the Lord, but they shall not find it."*

In the same way, the Lord was telling Daniel that people will seek for wisdom in all kinds of places, but **they won't find it**. They will *"run to and fro"* looking for knowledge, when all the while it's **right here in front of them**. While the wicked search for wisdom in vain, God's people are supposed to **know** where to find it, **Proverbs 1:7**, *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction."*

And so Daniel is instructed in verse 4 to *"shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end."* It's not a matter of keeping the words secret, but rather it's a matter of storing them **safely** for future generations of God's people to read. The reality is that God's truth is often **hidden in plain sight**. The Bible displays its riches so clearly that the simplest believer can **grasp** its essential message, while the most brilliant intellectual reads the same words but **fails** to discern their truth. And as a result, men and women often go searching for spiritual insight through all manner of religious experiences, but fail to find it. God's Word is the only source of true insight: the wise read it and understand who God is and what God's doing in this world.

This stress on God's people having wisdom and knowledge and understanding is an important point for us today because we live in an age that despises doctrine and plays down knowledge in favor of having an experience. Our postmodern age affirms every form of spirituality because it views all **truth** as relative and our **experience** as normative. Therefore, truth becomes whatever philosophy or worldview or religion that gives me **the experiences** I want.

And so, to hold to the idea that we have a unique, authoritative Truth revealed once and for all in God's Word, the inspired Bible, the Holy Scriptures ... is therefore **highly** countercultural. And yet, Daniel, and us, are repeatedly told to be **wise** and to **understand** the things revealed by God, and to teach those things to others ... for such understanding will help them, and us, to stand firm in the midst of the messiness of living in a broken world. But Daniel is struggling to understand all this, and so the rest of the chapter goes about answering two more questions about this vision. And the first question is ...

#### **v. 5-12: HOW LONG WILL IT BE?**

*"Then I, Daniel, looked, and behold, two others stood, one on this bank of the stream and one on that bank of the stream. <sup>6</sup> And someone said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the stream, "**How long shall it be** till the end of these wonders?" <sup>7</sup> 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 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 these things would be finished. <sup>8</sup> I heard, but I did not understand. Then I said, "O my lord, what shall be the outcome of these things?" <sup>9</sup> He said, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end. <sup>10</sup> Many shall purify themselves and make themselves white and be refined, but the wicked shall act wickedly. And none of the wicked shall understand, but those who are wise shall understand. <sup>11</sup> And from the time that the regular burnt*

*offering is taken away and the abomination that makes desolate is set up, there shall be 1,290 days.* <sup>12</sup> *Blessed is he who waits and arrives at the 1,335 days.*”

This question is asked by one whom Daniel sees in this vision, presumably an angel, in verse 6, “**How long shall it be till the end of these wonders?**” This question reveals one aspect of what it means to live wisely in a broken world.

The answer to the question, “How long?” has two parts: it will be, verse 7, “*for a time, times, and half a time*” and, verse 11, “*there shall be 1,290 days.*” Both of these terms roughly describe a time period of around three and a half years. We saw this phrase, “*a time, times, and half a time*” back in **Daniel 7:25**, “*He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.*”

We know from Daniel 4 that seven times, or seven years, is considered a complete period of judgment, and so, in contrast to seven times, this period of trials is limited and cut short in length. Meanwhile, the 1,290 days focuses on the precision with which this period of time is measured. Then, there’s an additional figure of 1,335 days in verse 12, which adds days to this time period, seeming to signal that God’s people will need to persevere all the way to the end. The inclusion of this number seems designed to increase the sense of **mystery** that surrounds the Lord’s timing and emphasizes the need for faithful perseverance on the part of God’s people ... even when according to our wisdom and our timetable; God’s arrival seems to be overdue. So, regardless of when we think the end should come, it seems clear that we’ll still have to wait patiently for the end to come according to God’s wisdom, not ours.

Taken together, then, these odd phrases and numbers seems to characterize history as a whole as a time of judgment, trial, and suffering. At the same time, they remind us that these trials and sufferings are **limited** by the mercy of God. And furthermore, that the precise end to this time is utterly impenetrable by any form of human logic or wisdom, and we just need to persevere in faith, hope, and love until the very end.

And so that gives us three things we need to know in order to live wisely in a broken world. **First**, it’s really important to remember that our struggles with brokenness and suffering are limited by the Lord’s mercy. It seems that in 18 years of ministry, there’s always been a few people who respond to the question, “How you doing?” with the answer, “**Better than I deserve.**” And while this is usually said somewhat glibly, it’s also profoundly true.

Whatever our circumstances are, they’re better than I deserve.

Are we undergoing any pain or suffering, it’s certainly less than we would experience in hell, which is what we deserve.

Do we find our spiritual growth to be slow and frustrating? Whatever progress we see is only by the Spirit of God, so any growth is something for which we should be thankful, even if it’s only the ability to see our sin and sorrow over it.

Are we dealing with damaged and broken relationships? And yet the Scriptures promise us peace with God through a relationship with Jesus Christ, which is easily way better than we deserve.

All of the bad stuff that comes into our lives is limited by the mercy of God. Yes, it may seem bad, but in reality, it should probably be way worse, so no matter what’s going on, it’s better than I deserve.

**Second**, I’m never going to understand every single detail about the end times, about the end of the world, about the end of pain and suffering, about all the tough times that you and I

have faced ... **this side of Heaven**. I really worry when people get all wrapped up in end-times speculation, and trying to figure out all the details, because the Bible makes clear that only God knows. Jesus said in **Matthew 24:36**, “*But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.*”

And so we simply need to trust that God knows what He’s doing, even when I don’t know what He’s doing. I need to trust that God the Father won’t put me through any unnecessary trials; He won’t keep me in those trials any longer than necessary, even when I can’t see that for myself.

God will do whatever He deems necessary to get you to depend on Him. A lot of people talk to me when life gets hard, and sometimes I find myself telling them that they better turn to God because things could **actually get worse**. If God allowed this hard thing into your life to get you to turn back to Him, **and you don’t, then watch out!** Because God will go to great lengths to demonstrate that depending solely on yourself is a losing cause and only by turning to God and depending on Him will you find peace. You won’t necessarily find **easy**, but you **will find peace**.

Our heavenly father brings trials and tribulations into our lives and exposes the brokenness in our lives in a variety of ways for exactly the right period of time. He knows just what challenges are necessary to move His work forward in our hearts, and for how long they need to be applied. And the end will come when God is done with the process, not when we think He should be done.

**Third**, our part in this whole process is ... in the words of the old hymn ... to trust and obey. While sometimes tremendously hard **to do**, it’s **not hard** to understand — have faith in God and do what He says. That doesn’t mean it will always be pleasant, easy, or convenient ... but when we face incomprehensible experiences as broken people living in a broken world, we have to persevere and trust that God understands and knows what He’s doing. We can certainly cry out to Him in prayer and plead with Him to show His presence in the midst of our pain and suffering. We need to remind ourselves everyday that the trials we face in our lives don’t come to us by random chance and circumstances, but from a heavenly Father who has fitted those trials to our needs, and even more so, to shape us into the kind of people He wants us to be.

Now, that’s a long answer to the question, “How long, O Lord?” but that’s not the only question that needs to be addressed. There’s another question here in the text ...

**v. 13, 1-3: HOW WILL IT END?**

<sup>13</sup> “*But go your way till the end. And you shall rest and shall stand in your allotted place at the end of the days.*”

<sup>1</sup> “*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 till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book.* <sup>2</sup> *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.* <sup>3</sup> *And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.*”

This question is actually a follow-up question to the one the angel asked. Daniel heard the question and the reply, but didn’t understand it right away. And so he asked, back in verse 8, ““*O my lord, what shall be the outcome of these things?*” Or, as I have phrased it, “**How will it end?**”

The answer to this question, taken together with the answer to the last one, unfolds another aspect of living wisely in a broken world. These are the things that Daniel needs to understand, and what we need to understand, in order to live with wisdom. And this is an answer that nobody likes. Because the responses, given in verses 7 and 10, are that God's people are going to be broken and they're going to face suffering. God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life ... and it's gonna hurt. **Not** what we want to hear. We want to hear that the wicked people are going to be broken and suffer, not us.

And yet the Bible, and in particular, the teachings of Jesus, are filled with what we call "The Paradoxes of the Kingdom":

The last shall be first.

The slave shall be free.

The poor shall be rich.

The blind shall see.

The meek shall inherit the earth.

The foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of men.

The Bible, and in particular, the words of Jesus, are full of **these upside-down teachings**. And apocalyptic literature is full of them too. And one of them is that **suffering is the path to glory**. The wisdom of **the world** is focused on having strength and power and success **in this world!** It tells you to have **Your Best Life Now! That's unbiblical!** If there's anything to be learned from Daniel, it's that the lives of God's people will frequently be anything but the best.

Jesus tells us that there will be wars and rumors of wars, persecutions and trials, famines and earthquakes, false prophets and false teachers, **Matthew 24:11-14**, "*And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray.*"<sup>12</sup> *And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold.*"<sup>13</sup> **But the one who endures to the end will be saved.**<sup>14</sup> *And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*"

God's wisdom is not the wisdom of the world, and in God's wisdom the way in which we're healed of our brokenness is through fiery trials. When the wise go through trials, they are "**purified, made spotless, and refined.**" Meanwhile, when the wicked go through trials, they just continue to be wicked. The trials serve to reveal **the difference** between the wise and the wicked. And the Apostle Peter reminds us that it's the trials that demonstrate our faith, **1 Peter 1:7**, "*so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*"

Therefore, this age, this present darkness, is revealed to be a time of constant refining and testing of our faith, in which only God's grace is able to sustain us. However, we read in verse 3 that in the age to come "**those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.**"

There is a rest that awaits Daniel after his work on earth is done, and that rest waits for us as well. If we persevere by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, then there will be a glorious rest prepared for us, when our sin will be done away with and our guilt cleansed forever.

In that age, all of our brokenness will finally be **fixed**.

We say that we believe in the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Well, the doctrine of the resurrection finds its clearest Old Testament expression **here in Daniel 12:1-3**.

And it's not just some theological doctrine that we're supposed to profess, but it's **God's profound answer** to our brokenness in this life and it's the basis for our perseverance. **The resurrection is what gives us hope.** It's what enables us to have hearts that reach out for the glorious inheritance that is ours in Christ Jesus. As our physical bodies' age and break down, our hearts long all the more for the wholeness of heaven. When we see most clearly that this world is not enough, then our eyes turn ever more eagerly to what God has promised in the age to come.

And that brings us to our last question and the best answer ...

### **CONCLUSION: HOW WILL WE BE CURED?**

How do we get **cured** of our brokenness? How will the broken world in which we live be **restored** to wholeness? Ultimately, it's accomplished through God Himself taking flesh in the person of Jesus Christ and being broken for us.

Was there ever a greater display of brokenness than we see at the cross? At the cross we see the brokenness of this fallen world that would take its own Creator and crucify Him. On the cross we see the brokenness of the true Israel of God, it was there on the cross that Jesus personified the people of God, and it was there on the cross that He was thoroughly broken. In fact, He was so broken that He needed a stranger to pick up His cross and carry it to Calvary, and then He needed someone else to come and carry His corpse down again. Was there ever a greater display of brokenness and weakness than on that Good Friday cross?

Yet the foolishness of God is **wiser** than the wisdom of men. His weakness is **stronger** than the strength of men. For the brokenness of Christ in our place is the means by which we, His broken people, are healed and restored. It's through the brokenness of Christ that this fallen and ruined world will be set back to its former glory. On the cross Christ took our sin and brokenness on Himself: He was wounded for our transgressions and beaten for our iniquities. He took upon Himself the suffering and curse that we deserved for our unrighteousness, and through His death, we are given life. By His stripes, we are healed. Through His brokenness, all of our brokenness shall be healed. So whatever your brokenness ... whatever your sins ... whatever your transgressions ... Jesus Christ's death on the cross is more than sufficient **to fix them all.**

We should glory in the resurrection of Christ that first Easter morning. He's the first fruits of the saints who will shine forever, and His glorified body is the pattern after which our own resurrection bodies will be modeled.

Finally, we must remember that the primary Biblical image for the saints is not that of a crusader, but that of a martyr. It's not our task to come along on a white horse to save the world. That job belongs to someone else. As the Apostle John tells us, **Revelation 19:11-16**, "*Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The One sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.* <sup>12</sup> *His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems, and He has a name written that no one knows but Himself.* <sup>13</sup> *He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which He is called is The Word of God.* <sup>14</sup> *And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following Him on white horses.* <sup>15</sup> *From His mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.* <sup>16</sup> *On His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.*"

The day is coming when Jesus Christ will ride out to conquer and recreate, a day when the kingdom of this world will become the kingdom of our God and of His Christ, **Revelation**

**11:15**, “Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever.”

And when the final trumpet sounds for us, bringing an end to our earthly conflict, then at last we too will hear our redeemer say, “*But go your way till the end. And you shall rest and shall stand in your allotted place at the end of the days.*” And we shall rise with Daniel — this same Daniel who stood in the lion’s den, who, like us, lived as a stranger in a strange land, who prayed daily for the coming of the kingdom.

And we shall rise with Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, who were called Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and who faced the fiery furnace, and in **faith** said, “*Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. **But if not**, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.*” And we shall rise with them, and with all the saints, of all times and places, to receive our final reward in Christ.

What’s more, it is this Christ who has already returned from His time of exile and now sits at the right hand of the Father in Heaven. He has prepared our places there, and His presence there is a **guarantee** that one day we’ll be there with Him as His people. **The cross** is the means by which God’s faithfulness **redeems** the unfaithful; the **resurrection** is the guarantee of our inheritance in Heaven.

Remind yourselves of this Gospel! Fix your eyes on Jesus Christ **crucified, resurrected, and exalted**. He’s not only pioneered the way home, **He is the way home**. Ask Him to give you **wisdom** and **understanding** in your home, in your school, in your workplace. Be **dependent** on Him and **trust** in His faithfulness.

**That’s** what the Book of Daniel is all about.

This is a **Gospel book** and it’s about the coming of the Kingdom “*of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever.*”

And **that’s** what Easter is all about.

Think about that. You need to pray.

Take a moment to do that, and then I’ll close.

*Heavenly Father, we thank You for this great Book of Daniel, by which You have taught us these last several months. May the lessons of Daniel not be lost to us. May we recognize the broken world around us and give us the faith to stand firm until that great day when Jesus comes back to fix all the broken things and all the broken people. Show us how much we are loved by You. Lord, come quickly, we pray in the Name of Jesus Christ, who lives, and reigns, and is coming again. Amen.*

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**1 Corinthians 15:20-24**

*“But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. <sup>21</sup> For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. <sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. <sup>23</sup> But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at His coming those who belong to Christ. <sup>24</sup> Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power.”*

**Revelation 22:20**

*“He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming soon.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!”*