***Daniel 12:1-6 “At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book. 2And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt. 3Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever. 4“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.” 5Then I, Daniel, looked; and there stood two others, one on this riverbank and the other on that riverbank. 6And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, “How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?”***

We’ve arrived to the end of the Book of Daniel. The 12th chapter looks toward the end of times and Antichrist. Daniel gives us a glimpse into the end of days, aligning perfectly with what our Savior Himself said in the Gospels. Tonight, we’ll take the first 6 verses, as there is just too much per verse to do them all tonight.

Verse 1*“At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book.**At that time Michael shall stand up* – Now appears the Arch Angel Michael, his name means Who is like God. Michael fought with Satan and his angels in Revelation 12:7. Now, he stands for Israel and the saved of God, as the distress of Israel and God’s people reaches its height. In Daniel 10:21, we learned that Michael is called the nation of Israel’s prince. This is clearly looking toward the time of the Antichrist and final tribulation. So in the passage *The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people,* we have a prophecy that applies to two points in time. The first is Michael standing for Israel in the immediate aftermath of the death of Antiochus. But, we have a second meaning here in the introduction of the Messiah, Jesus and Michael standing during the Final Tribulation. Jesus will bring Salvation and Deliverance to the Jews and the Gentiles in about 100 more years. This predicts the birth of the Son of God. and a Salvation far greater than any mere deliverance from an earthly foe. The deliverance will be from our spiritual foes, death and separation from God through sin. Michael will protect Israel during the great time of trouble. *And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation* – Jesus speaks of the great tribulation and quotes Daniel in Matthew 24:15-22 *“Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand), 16 “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 17 Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. 18 And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. 19 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 20 And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. 21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened*. What calamities in the end times? Revelation 16:18-21 tells us *And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth. 19 Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. 20 Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. 21 And great hail from heaven fell upon men, each hailstone about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great.* God’s wrath will be poured out on the blasphemous earth in judgements that we cannot imagine.  *And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book –* these are those who have their name found written in the Lamb’s Book of Life, those that believed on Jesus and became His true disciples. In the Rapture, we will be saved before the worst of the calamities come upon us. Revelation 13:8 reminds us *All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.* Our name will be in one place or the other. Our deliverance is recorded in the Book of Life of the Lamb, through our acceptance of Jesus.

Verse 2 *And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake –* This verse likely has a dual meaning. First, we know that Matthew 27:52-53 records this after Jesus resurrection - *and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; 53 and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.*The larger meaning looks toward spiritual awakening and enlivening through the Salvation of Jesus Christ and the resurrection that will happen in the final judgement spoken of in Revelation 20 and 1 Thessalonians 4. *Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt –* Jesus refers to this in John 5:28-29 *Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice 29 and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.* Recall that Daniel has just been told of the death of Antiochus and how some Jews held fast, and some gave in. These faithful did not accept the deliverance offered by Antiochus because they had hope in a greater resurrection. Likewise, in the end times, the Antichrist will offer deliverance in the form of the mark of the beast. The Faithful will know the Truth and refuse this fake deliverance. 2 Thessalonians 2:11-15 – *And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, 12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. 13But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, 14 to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.****15****Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.* We either stand firm or we fall for delusion. In the end, we will receive new bodies and live forever in the new heaven and new earth.

Verse 3 *Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever. Those who are wise –* Those that have been given the wisdom to embrace Salvation in Christ and live as His disciple *shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament –* they will be clothed in righteousness. At the end of the parable about the wheat and the tares, Matthew 13, Jesus says in verse 43 - *Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!* The righteous will reflect God’s glory and will look like Christ in heaven. *And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever* – those that witness and teach others, turning souls to believe in Jesus, will shine like the stars, luminous in heaven, for all eternity. This isn’t just pastors or Sunday school teachers. Revelation 22:12-14 *And behold, I am coming quickly, and****My reward is with Me****, to give to every one according to his work. 13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.”14 Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.* Those doing the work of Christ, using their talents for Christ, praying for the Kingdom, and keeping His commandments will be rewarded.

Verse 4 - *“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.” But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book* – This makes sense. Daniel 10:14 *told us - Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come.”* The book is finished, and Gabriel says seal it. The time of fulfillment is still far in the future. As was common in those times, the book would have been sealed and stored away for future generations. The scrolls were valuable, treasured, and usually only a limited number of copies. *Until the time of the end* – Meaning, sealed until the appointed time, God’s appointed and decreed time - the 70th week of the Tribulation. In this way, wise and faithful men and women, like us, understand that these things were prophesied far in advance, revealing the all-knowing God we serve. *Many shall run to and fro –* Many will read these prophecies and search out their true meaning. Those who are wise, as in verse 3, will take the opportunity to repent and return to God, correct their ways, and seek how to live ever more in line with God’s will. They will help others understand the scriptures and the Revelation of Jesus Christ. Those unwise will seek knowledge from other sources and become wise in their own eyes. *And knowledge shall increase* – Worldly knowledge will increase. People will deny the need for God given their earthly wisdom. During the end times, people will search for why all that is happening is happening. The knowledge of the Gospel will be available through books like Daniel. Many will come to believe in Jesus. Some theologians believe that this refers to the Gospel *running to and fro* by so many different ways until the whole world has been given the opportunity to hear. Matthew 24:9-14 says *Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake. 10 And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. 11 Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. 12 And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. 13 But he who endures to the end shall be saved. 14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.* We are growing ever closer to the time when the Gospel has reached all nations. The end will then come.

Verse 5 & 6 *Then I, Daniel, looked; and there stood two others, one on this riverbank and the other on that riverbank.  6And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, “How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?” Then I, Daniel, looked –* This appears to start a new vision. *And there stood two others, one on this riverbank and the other on that riverbank.* Two angels standing by the Tigris and quite probably the Euphrates – recall that this started at what is believed the confluence or the coming together of these two great rivers in Daniel 10. *And one said -* one of the angels said, though some theologians read it as Daniel said.  *To the man clothed in linen* – this man clothed in linen was mentioned in Daniel 10:5-6 and is interpreted to be the Son of God, Jesus. Revelation 1:12-13 *Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.* The Man is asked *How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?”* There is an appointed time and that is the question being asked. Only God knows. When is the time of the end, when will all these events be accomplished? Remember what Jesus says in Matthew 24:36 “*But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.* In verse 44, He instructs us - *Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.*

In our next evening service, we will hear Jesus speak of a time, times, and half a time. We will look directly at the end times. The Antichrist arises, Tribulation, the Rapture, and the End. Daniel will remain Fearless, Focused, and Faithful to the end, rising one day to his inheritance at the end of days. So may we remain so and receive our reward when our Savior greets us with well done and welcomes us into His rest.