

Mine eyes have seen the glory

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Date: 02 July 2006

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[0 : 00] Well, do turn, if you would, to Daniel chapter 12. And if you want a title this evening, it's really the title of the hymn that we sang after the reading, Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory.

We've come at last to the end of this remarkable book, the book of Daniel. And it's been hard work. I know for some of you it's been very hard going, perhaps.

But I do hope that for some of us, at least, it has been rewarding of our labors. This is not a book to give us a weekly spiritual pick-me-up.

It's a hard book. It is a book to prepare us for suffering. And for some of us, that may mean that it's a book very pertinent to our situation right now.

For others of us, perhaps not. But friends, suffering will come in the Christian life. And suffering will come in the Christian church. And the way our society is going, it seems more and more likely that both of these things are going to be ever greater realities in our lives.

[1 : 27] And Daniel is a book to prepare us for that. Remember that what we have in chapter 12 is the end of one great vision that began at chapter 10.

A vision of the future stretching right out from Daniel's time to the very end of the battles and the struggles for God's people. Not just to the end of the exile.

Daniel's great prayer in chapter 9 was taken up with that. But remember, God expanded Daniel's horizons much, much further. To the end, not just of Israel's exile and estrangement from God because of sin.

But to the end of the whole world's exile and estrangement from God because of sin. Daniel heard about the Anointed One who would come at last in the fullness of the time after 70 weeks of years to bring an end to sin.

To atone for iniquity. To bring in everlasting righteousness. Do you remember that was the wonderful end of Daniel chapter 9? But following that was this last vision, chapters 10 to 12.

[2 : 37] And they are taken up with the end of history. With the whole of what is repeatedly called in these chapters, again and again, the latter days or the time of the end.

It's what the New Testament calls the last days. And when the New Testament uses that term, it always refers, always, to the time from Christ's coming in history to make atonement for sin, to inaugurate his kingdom.

From that time right up until the very last day of history, when our Lord Jesus comes again. And that's what this vision in Daniel 10 to 12 is all about.

It's summed up in just a few words in the very first verse of Daniel chapter 10. And the word was true, says Daniel, and it was a great conflict, or it concerned a great war, says the NIV.

And remember chapter 10 showed us that war from a heavenly perspective. War in the heavenly realms, the dark powers that lie behind all human history.

[3 : 42] And the angels of God, under God's command, doing battle with them on behalf of his people. That was chapter 10. Chapter 11 gives us a different viewpoint.

The same conflict, but as it is played out in earthly history. Remember, we saw that that history was one of, and is one, of relentless warfare from a contemptuous world against God's kingdom and against God's covenant, his gospel.

A warfare that goes right to the end of history. Chapter 11 does describe, yes, the coming chapter of history for God's people after Daniel's day, but also the constant character of the pattern throughout all history.

And so also the final cosmic climax of evil at the very end of human history. And yet at the same time, throughout all of that relentless conflict, there is the resolute witness of a confessing church.

And there is the promise that there shall be at last an end. At the height of the arrogant pretension of evil of the forces arrayed against God in this universe, suddenly, as verse 45 of chapter 11 says, suddenly, this last great opposer of God, this antichrist figure, will come to his end with none to help him.

[5 : 14] And now what we have in chapter 12 is the tail end of that vision. Verses 1 to 4 of chapter 12 are the tail end of that vision. And they tell us what lies beyond the final end of history, when all the evil in the world has been at last destroyed forever.

That's what it tells us. And then from verse 5 through to the end of the chapter, there's an epilogue that applies that message home to Daniel personally. And whatever mysteries may remain for us in this chapter, these mysterious time periods and so on, the application is absolutely clear.

The significance of the message of this chapter is crystal clear to Daniel and to us. And that's what we mustn't miss. Don't let's get bogged down in things we can't understand and miss things that we can understand and must understand.

That's the way to approach this chapter. It's the way to approach the whole Bible, in fact. So I want to look at this chapter under just two headings, seeking to follow the structure as I've just described it, or at least more or less.

We'll see that the end of the vision, really verses 1 to 3, is a section on its own. And then the epilogue, that is structured, as we'll see, around two questions and answers and two important commands that God gives Daniel, and therefore which God gives us.

[6 : 40] And we'll see that it's a simple message, that it's an amazingly relevant message, and in fact it's a wonderful message. Verse 1 to 3, first of all, is all about the reality of eternal glory.

It's God's clear revelation of the future. And then verses 4 to the end, talk about the road to that eternal glory.

Our clear responsibility in the present time, as we respond to God's revelation of the future. If you want a simple way of looking at it, the first part is the Christian hope, and the second part, the Christian faith.

So let's look at verses 1 to 3, firstly then. The reality of eternal glory. The focus of these final verses of the Great Vision is clearly on evidence.

It's on God's clear revelation from heaven above of a glorious future beyond the end of time. When at last, in the words of Daniel chapter 2, the Most High God will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed.

[7 : 53] Or in the words of chapter 7, when the saints of the Most High will possess the kingdom forever and ever. That's what these verses show us. To use the words of this chapter, it's all about the day of resurrection.

Verse 2, the day when deliverance finally comes, when the dead shall rise. Verse 13, when the faithful shall rise to receive their allotted inheritance, to receive it forever and ever.

In short, these verses paint a vivid picture for us of what the New Testament just simply calls the Christian hope. Whatever mysteries may remain, whatever may be uncertain in these visions, this we cannot possibly miss.

Just one of the most glorious passages in the Old Testament, in the whole Bible in fact. Just look at these first few verses. At that time, verse 1. Well, that clearly refers to what's gone before, doesn't it?

The chapter division here is a real pain in the neck. It spoils things and gets in the way. Verses 40 of chapter 11, right through to the end of chapter 12, verse 4, is all really one paragraph.

[9 : 07] And what verses 40 to 45 of chapter 11 gives us is essentially what the climax of human history looks like from the world's point of view. It's what it's going to seem like to us on planet Earth.

It's a horrifying picture. It speaks of increasing opposition and hostility to the kingdom of God. It speaks of a rising ferocity of the enemies of God arrayed against the glorious land, against God's kingdom.

It speaks of the unbridled defiance of evil. In verse 45, the picture is of the enemy with his palatial tents pitched right against God's holy mountain, the glorious holy mountain, standing over and against him with arrogance and utterly unashamed.

It's the very height of the triumph of all that is anti-God, that is anti-kingdom, that's anti-the gospel. A terribly horrifying picture.

This is how the world is going to end. The opposition to God and his church and his people is going to get worse and worse and worse. But then, at the very zenith of evil, comes sudden utter destruction.

[10 : 25] Verse 45, Yet he shall come to an end with none to help him. That's the picture in earthly human terms. But at verse 1 of chapter 12, we are then shown the same thing, the climax of world history from a heavenly perspective.

This is the behind-the-scenes view, that we've seen before in chapter 10. And in fact, now we're back to the language of chapter 10 about angels and princes in the spiritual realms.

Verse 1 describes that climax, that end of history, and it explains it from heaven's viewpoint. Just as in verse 1 of chapter 11, the great figure, the man of heaven, the son of man, above the waters with the great voice, just as he then strengthened Michael to rise up and fight for God's people in the first year of Darius.

And the result was that God's people were brought back, redeemed out of the land of Babylon, brought back to the place of Israel. So here, at the end of history, the son of man causes Michael to arise to bring about the great final redemption of God's people.

You see, from heaven's viewpoint, that's what stands behind it all. This is the final conflict. It's the last battle that C.S. Lewis writes of. It's the final end of the great cosmic conflict.

[11 : 53] It's the great and last redemption. This is the day that we all long for as Christian believers. It's the day that ends time. It's the day that ushers in the eternal kingdom of God, forever and forever.

That's what Daniel shows us vividly. That's what he sees in this dream. And it tells us, friends, why Christian people are longing for that day.

Why we're saying, come Lord Jesus. I hope you are longing for that day. If you're in any doubt about that, read these verses. Look at the things it tells us about what that day will mean.

First of all, in verse 1, we're told, it will be a day of eternal deliverance. At that time, your people shall be delivered. The vision that Daniel has and the vision that John has in the book of Revelation, they simply portray the heavenly counterpart to the great victory on the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ that delivers his people from this present evil age.

As Paul writes to the Galatians. That delivers his people from the dominion of darkness and transfers them into the kingdom of the beloved Son. As he writes to the Colossians.

[13 : 12] Do you remember Revelation chapter 12? We see that vision of the war in heaven and Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon, Satan, who's cast down, who's defeated.

It's the last battle. How is he conquered? By the blood of the Lamb and by testimony to that blood, by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

You see, the victory in the heavenly realms is won, is brought about by the victory on earth in history of the Son of God, of Jesus Christ.

The Son of God who breaks into this world with the power to break the power of cancelled sin. To bring delivery and deliverance from spiritual bondage.

And that's what Daniel sees here in visionary form. He sees it at a great distance, but he sees it clearly enough. That day is a day of deliverance. And that's the overwhelming reality here in this chapter.

[14 : 12] It's victory and deliverance in the ultimate conflict with evil because because of the might of the glorious man of heaven.

The Son of Man who stands above everything, above the waters, as verse 6 says, commanding his angels to bring deliverance for his people. He can do that because of what Daniel had already seen prophesied in chapter 9.

Because he himself, the Anointed One, would come to end sin. To make an atonement for iniquity. To bring in everlasting righteousness forever.

It's all in his control. And therefore he can command his angels to bring deliverance for his people on that day when he comes again.

It was Gabriel who announced that coming salvation to Daniel in chapter 9. It's Michael who's the warrior who brings that great deliverance. But only because he's strengthened and empowered by the glorious Son of God and his great work of deliverance from sin forever.

[15 : 26] It's a day of deliverance. That's the Christian hope. That's the evidence that's revealed from heaven to Daniel here. That's what was announced to him by Gabriel all these centuries beforehand.

And it was announced again by Gabriel, wasn't it, many centuries later. Do you remember Luke chapter 1? To a virgin called Mary in the town of Galilee. And Zechariah who also had a meeting with the angel.

He sang about the horn of God's salvation who would bring deliverance from all his people's enemies forever. And so you see our hope is so much more certain even than Daniel's was.

We've seen so much of all of this already fulfilled. And we know that at last that eternal deliverance shall come. Gabriel has fulfilled his mission at the beginning.

Michael will not fail in his mission at the end. And friends, you need to remember that. You need to remember that in your great struggles in life.

[16 : 39] Whatever that struggle is, whether it's a struggle inwardly with your own sin, whether it's struggles outwardly because of your faith in this world, don't forget God has commanded his angels to be about you.

Our whole history, our personal history is hedged in by the angels of God and the day of deliverance shall come. That's our hope, a day of eternal deliverance.

At that time, your people shall be delivered. But second, Daniel sees that it will be a day of eternal judgment. Verse 2, clearly it's talking about a resurrection generally of all people to face judgment at the end of history.

The many, as our ESV Bibles translate it, the many who sleep in the dust of the earth, that's just a Hebrew way of expressing totality. That's why the NIV translates it multitudes. If you've got any doubt, read John chapter 5 where Jesus is referring to this and he quite clearly says that on that day all, all will rise to be judged.

Some for eternal life and others for condemnation. And that's absolutely clear here too, isn't it? in verse 2, do you see? We must take it seriously.

[17 : 57] This judgment is clearly parallel. Some receive eternal life, others shame and everlasting contempt. There's no sense here of the annihilation of the wicked.

This is a picture of anything. It's a picture of conscious, permanent experience of shame, experience of contempt. You can't experience shame and contempt unless you're conscious.

Now, is there any possibility of universal salvation here? Do you see in verse 1, it's only those whose name are written in the book who rise to life, who are delivered. We've seen this judgment seen already back in chapter 7 when the court sat and books were open.

You see it again if you read Revelation chapter 20 in fearful clarity. anyone whose name is not written in the book of life is cast into the lake of eternal fire.

Very solemn. That's why Jesus warned his disciples in Luke 16 not to be taken up with trivialities. Don't worry about having the power to cast out demons, to trample serpents and scorpions.

[19 : 14] That doesn't matter at all wit, says Jesus. Rather focus on the one thing that really matters. What does he say? Rejoice rather that your names are written in heaven.

You see our hope for deliverance actually depends upon judgment. Did you realize that? Did you realize that without God's judgment on sin there can't be any victory over our enemies, can't be any deliverance.

Deliverance is only through judgment if Jesus has borne your judgment so that your name is in the book of life. Our hope is in judgment because without judgment by God there can be no end to this fallen world, no end to evil, no end to wickedness.

And no beginning of a new world, the home of righteousness, that can only come through judgment. Judgment is the Christian hope. Remember that when somebody questions you about that and says well we want salvation but we don't like God's judgment.

Can't have it. And that brings us to the third thing about this day that we hope for. We're told that it will be the day of eternal new creation, of recreation through God's redemption.

[20 : 38] This is very real. There is an awful separation here. There is a real judgment. We mustn't ignore that. Nevertheless, all the focus it seems to me in this vision here is on the life that is eternal.

Multitudes will rise to eternal life, says Daniel. This is recreation. It's the reversal of the curse of Genesis chapter 3 where God says you are dust and to dust you'll return.

It's the awful words, isn't it, that we say over a coffin. when we lower our loved one into the gaping jaws of the grave and the cold earth to decompose, to decay ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

That can be the most utterly desolating experience of human life, can't it? And without the Christian hope it is utterly crushing, it's devastating, it's destroying to people.

But not when you have seen the reality of the eternal glory, not if you have this hope. Because this is the reversal, it's the very antithesis of the destruction of our bodies and the despair that that brings.

[22 : 02] This day is the day of recreation, of eternal recreation. In Genesis chapter 2 God took the dust of the earth and breathed life into it and made men and women living beings.

But here God takes his breath and breathes into the dust of life, eternal life, life that will never ever end. Life that will never again be ravaged by disease and deformity and decay, by the cancer or the arthritis or the psychosis or whatever it is that robs us of the fullness of life, the fullness of relationships, the fullness of the barrenness that robs us of the children that we longed for and loved to have but did not have, of the strokes that rob us of our loved ones and leave them imprisoned in a mere shell of what they once were, death of our last and greatest enemy.

It robs us even of the imperfection of life that we have now. This is the reality of our life on this earth. God does not promise us relief from all of these things now in the present.

But our hope is in the day of recreation, resurrection, life forever and ever and ever, of life as God planned it to be.

That is the Christian hope. That is the day that's coming. I don't know if you feel like me whenever we say the creed and you come to the crescendo at the end.

[23 : 49] I believe in the holy catholic church, in the communion of saints, in the forgiveness of sins, in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. I don't know if you feel with me a thrill inside your breast.

That is what we believe. That is what that day will bring. That's our hope. It's a day of new creation. It's re-creation. Not life after death.

Like some disembodied spirit, some will of the rest. Never. It's the death of death. It's the reversal of death. It's the re-creation of new creation. From the dust of bodily lives and bodily relationships of the utmost fulfillment.

Bodily joy that will last forever and forever, never to be taken away again. And it's a certain hope.

It's a sure hope. Verse 7 shows us the Son of Man standing his right hand and his left hand to the heavens swearing by Almighty God above.

[25 : 03] This shall be. There will come a day, he says, when these things shall be finished. And friends, we have a better hope even than that.

We have the words of our Lord Jesus Christ stretched out on the cross saying, it is finished. Christ. And we have the glory of his resurrection body raised up from the grave, raised up in new creation life in a body that will live forever and ever.

And we have the word of the gospel that says, and we shall be like him. Listen to how Paul puts it to the Corinthians.

The first man was from the earth, a man of dust. The second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust. And as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven.

Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven. Our hope is in the day of new creation.

[26 : 12] And we shall be like him with bodies recreated, never to be destroyed by the dust of death again.

And that's why fourth, we are told in verse three, that that day will be a day of eternal vindication and glory. Verse three must be one of the most wonderful verses in all scripture.

Just look at it. 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.

That day will be a day of everlasting glory for the people of God. It will be a day of eternal vindication for them in the eyes of all the universe. Who are the wise?

Who are these people who have turned many to righteousness? Well, they're the same ones we read about last time in chapter 11, verse 33. Who turned many to righteousness by their resolute witness, making many understand the truth despite sword and flame, captivity and plunder.

[27 : 26] It's ordinary faithful believers in Jesus Christ who stand for the Lord, who stand for his gospel despite the scars and the shames that this world will throw at you until the last day.

That's who will shine like the stars forever and ever. In this world it's shame. That day it's shining.

John Piper was speaking about that just the other week. About how the shame of the believers in Acts chapter 3 will be changed to the faces of the redeemed in Matthew 33.

And so it is here. Those whom the world have spat upon will shine like the light of the heavens.

And friends, you need to know that when your friends and your family have scorned you and shamed you for love to Jesus.

[28 : 25] When you've witnessed to his name and you've received nothing but slaps in the face, metaphorically even physically and worse. Every single one of those wounds that you have borne for Jesus Christ, every single scar, every mark of the cross on your body or even deep in your heart that no one's ever seen, they will shine like the stars in the sky above forever and forever.

Those wounds will be glorified in the view of all eternity forever. Rich wounds yet visible above in beauty glorified.

We sang about the Lord Jesus Christ and so it will be for you. It's the scars of the saints that will shine the light of glory in eternity forever and ever.

Because it's the wounds of the Lamb himself that are all the glory of Emmanuel's land. And every reflection, every reflection of those precious wounds in his people will be honored and be revered and will be glorified forever and forever.

They will shine like the brightness of the firmament and like the stars forever and ever. Friends, there may be nobody who can see or feel or understand the wounds that you bear for Jesus Christ in this world.

[30 : 00] Nobody else may ever see them. But on that day, they will shine and they will vindicate you before the angels of heaven in the presence of the Lamb.

Everyone who has stood for the Saviour through the struggles and the conflicts of this evil age will shine. And that's our hope. That's the reality of glory. It's guaranteed with an oath from heaven.

The hands to heaven of the Son of Man. It's guaranteed by the risen Jesus. And we shall be like him. And you know, it's a revelation with a purpose, isn't it?

This is just what the writer says in Hebrews chapter 6. He granted his promise with an oath so that we who have fled to him for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us.

That's the purpose of God's revelation. It demands response and it enables response. It's the Christian hope of glory that enables the Christian faith today.

[31 : 16] And that brings us to the epilogue. These last verses where it's all pressed home to Daniel, what it means for him. And therefore where it presses home for you and for me, what it means to us today.

God's revelation about the reality of glory. That means that you and I have clear responsibilities. It means that we must walk the road to glory.

That's what it means for us in the present. And the epilogue in verses 4 to 13 speak about that road to glory. If all the focus in verses 1 to 3 was on evidence of that glory, all the focus here is on endurance, now in the present.

Because of that wonderful revelation of hope we have, we have a huge responsibility to endure to the very end, to go through the many battles and the conflicts.

The battles without and within. That's your life. You know that. That's your personal life. That's our church life. Many battles. And there will be right to the end for you and for me.

[32 : 24] The yearnings of your life to be fuller, to be better, to be more than you want it to be. The struggle with sin. But the people who know their God, who have seen the glory, will be strong, says God.

They will be refined and purified and made white. They must, in the words of this chapter, they must go their way till the end.

And that's what these verses are all about. The Christian faith, going our way till the end. There will be many perplexities in the life of faith. But the point is this, with a sure and certain hope before us, we can and we must run with endurance the race set before us.

Whatever that means in terms of physical struggles, mental struggles, loneliness and loss, perplexities, apparently unanswered prayers.

We must go our way to the end. We must go on the road to glory. And with this vision before us, that's the point, we will be able to go our way to glory. That's the message of this epilogue to us.

[33 : 47] You see, there are two questions and two commands. The first question is in verse 6. It's asked by the angels. How long shall it be till the end? The answer is this mysterious period, time, times and half a time.

Same as chapter 7, verse 25. Same as the parallel between that and the last half of the last 70th week in chapter 9.

Parallel then in verses 11 and 12 to these 1,290 and the 1,335 days. Surely, these times are deliberately cryptic.

They must be because nobody seems to be able to understand them. Only God knows the day and the hour. That's what the Lord Jesus tells us in Matthew 24. You're not to speculate. Exact times and dates are not important.

Don't focus on that. We don't have to crack that. Verse 8 tells us Daniel couldn't quite understand that, but chapter 10, verse 1 tells us he did understand the vision.

[34 : 54] He understood its significance for him personally. And that's what we need to answer. We need to know what we're going to do in answer to that question, how long? Quite often my wife will ask me late at night, how long are you working tonight?

And the answer I give is, till I'm finished. And she knows what that means. It doesn't tell her the exact time that I'm going to come up to bed, but it does tell her what to do.

Don't wait up. And you see, that's the kind of answer Daniel gets here. It's not quantitative, it's qualitative. How long? The answer is, till the very end.

The end of the conflict for the holy people. Then it will be over, says the Lord. And that's the point. To the very end, there will be struggle. Right to the end.

Don't lose heart. Things may look utterly hopeless. It may very well be, as verse 7 and 8 seems to say here, may very well be that the organized witness of the Christian church will be shattered totally in the world.

[35 : 58] I think that probably is the case. I think Revelation chapter 11 leads us to see the same thing. It may seem that this goes on and on and on so that it's never going to end and only ever get worse.

Time rolls into times and it just seems never to be going. Will the Lord ever come? And the answer is yes. Don't despair. God isn't defeated.

He hasn't forgotten his promise. Could be that the reference to days in verses 11 and 12 are really making the same point as Peter makes in 2 Peter 3.

That God is not slow. That it seems to us like ages and ages and ages. Time and times and how many more times. And yet to God it's just a matter of days.

Days is a thousand years. But whatever that may be the point surely is clear. However long it seems don't give up.

[36 : 57] Don't despair. That's so important isn't it for us to remember? When we're surrounded by dark days in the church when we're surrounded by struggles in our own personal lives even when everything seems lost God says no keep on all these things shall be finished.

The second question is from Daniel in verse 8 what's the outcome? And again the answer is verse 9 fear not he says the promise is sure and certain it's sealed up it can't be tampered with God has spoken and God will do it verse 10 many shall be saved many multitudes shall be saved do you believe that?

God has promised it heaven will be full don't flag in your witness just because it seems nothing's happened multitudes will be saved on that day multitudes will be saved on that day even in Japan Ralph and Ilse and John and Elspeth have so much in their heart have so much in their heart for Japan and the tiny nucleus of Christians multitudes will be saved says God from heaven don't give up but others will persist in wickedness there are two roads says verse 10 and ultimately those two roads will become fixed destinies and that's the outcome that we need to know isn't it on this earth that's what calls for action now one day history will stop it'll freeze frame like the end of a movie and it'll fix forever the road that people are on

Revelation 22 11 speaks of that final freeze frame let the evildoers still do evil the filthy still be filthy the righteous still do right the holy still be holy one day time will stop and that's very solemn that's very solemn let me say to you if you're not a Christian tonight what will be freeze framed for eternity if the end of your time your life were to be tonight under a bus out there what is the outcome at the last verse 10 says the answer is a certain one a certain one for those who are on God's side now and for those who are against him now Revelation calls for response you see it makes us responsible today and right to the end of that road of glory we have to act and that's why there are also two commands in this epilogue to Daniel and to us

Revelation demands our response it demands faith and real faith means listening to God and responding obeying him the first command is in verse 4 it's a command to proclaim the truth of God he's to shut up the words he's to protect them he's to keep them safe he's to seal up the book that means he's to preserve its authority against any tampering in the Persian system what you did was you made two copies of a book one was made open for the public to read the other was sealed up and put in a museum sealed with clay so no one could tamper with it to ensure its veracity and Daniel is to preserve to protect not just the vision but the whole of God's great revelation about the end not so he can keep it secret but so he can make people understand it to make it public this is what God's people need to know that's what he's being told this is the one place where God's truth can be found verse 4 says that many will run around trying to increase knowledge but they'll never seek God's truth 2 Thessalonians 2 talks about the same thing they'll be deceived because they refuse to love the truth rather they love unrighteousness and that's our world today full of knowledge men on the moon information super highways but never so much folly never so much chaos in society never so little knowledge of God plenty of knowledge but no understanding of the truth and therefore no understanding of how to live now in the light of the day that's coming and the remedy for you Daniel for us you who have seen the reality of eternity who have seen the glory you have the responsibility to preserve to protect the truth so that you can proclaim it to the world to the very end that's what Paul tells Timothy in the last days people won't want this so what do you do lie down no tell them preach the word preach the truth tell them of the eternal realities of the day that's coming and do it to the very end despite sword and flame and plunder and captivity that's what the Christian faith means proclaim the truth in a hostile world do it right to the end and the second command persevere in the faith persevere in the faith that's the very personal word to Daniel in verse 9 and verse 13 go your way Daniel go your way till the end what we proclaim to others we must also make real and personal in our own lives it's no good knowing the truth it's no good just proclaiming the truth we're to walk in the truth and we're to go our way till the very end we're called to take our place we're called to take our place in our destiny that's the purpose of creation that's why God made every one of you that you should shine like the brightness of the sky like the stars forever and ever that's why God made you but you must enter that destiny this day before that day

[43 : 19] God has prepared a place for you by his glorious grace he's revealed to you the reality of this eternal glory but he's made you responsible there's a road to glory and he called Daniel to enter that destiny to prepare for himself that place and he calls you calls you and me to make our calling and election sure by walking the road right to the end but you go your way to the end friends that's the calling of the Christian faith it's a road that often is hard and steep and long and stony it's marked by struggles of all different kinds it's marked perhaps by loneliness by loss by unfulfilled desires and the things of this world by not having the marriage that you longed for but having the children that you were so desperate for not having the ministry that you craved after and you loved or a host of other things that will be like boulders in the way and there'll be many many temptations to give up to take an easier road and this vision says to us don't give up don't give up there's only two ways to be walking on that road one is towards glory and the other is away from glory and there will come a time when time stops and history is freeze framed and the direction that you're walking in will be fixed forever so don't give up remember the hope that's ours remember the reality of glory we've seen it like Daniel we've seen more than Daniel he had the oath of the glorious son of man we have the first fruits the spirit of the risen Jesus so don't give up and you will shine like the brightness of the sky above you will shine like the stars forever and ever go your way to the end

God's angels are walking the road with you Gabriel's behind you Michael's in front of you the Lord Jesus himself has paved the way for you your eyes have been opened you've glimpsed you've seen the glory so go your way till the end and you will at last see the glory of the coming of the Lord on that last day you'll see it with joy and rejoicing and gladness and wonder that's the Christian faith and as verse 13 says don't give up and you shall stand in your allotted place at the end of days that's the Christian faith it's based upon that hope where we're going to sing before we gather around the Lord's table number verse verse you you you you you you you you you you you you you you you you