

Daniel 12: Another Reason 2021 Could Be a Pivotal Year In Bible Prophecy

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DANIEL CHAPTER 12 records the prophet's final vision of the end times:

“And at that time [of the end] shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered ... And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt” (Dan. 12:1, 2).

When Daniel asks an angel in the vision about the timing of these events, a mysterious day-count is given:

“From the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away and the abomination that causes desolation set up, there shall be 1,290 days” (v. 11).

The standard interpretation of the 1,290 days is that they refer to the length of the final tribulation period, counted from when the daily sacrifice is taken away. While this interpretation is valid, we understand that in Bible prophecy a “day” may refer to a year of actual time. The biblical day-equals-a-year principle is found throughout Scripture, most prominently in Daniel chapter 9 where 490 days are counted as 490 years (Dan. 9:24-27; see also Gen. 29:27; Num. 14:34; Ezek. 4:5, 6).

Since a day equals a year in Daniel 9, it is reasonable to also count the days in Daniel 12 as years, and from a taking away of the daily sacrifice that occurred in the past.

In Daniel's time, the daily sacrifice was interrupted three times by the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar:

- 1) In 605–06 BC, when Nebuchadnezzar invaded Jerusalem and deported many Hebrews, including Daniel, to Babylon
- 2) In 597–99 BC, when Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem, captured King Jehoiachin, and carried off some of the Temple's vessels to Babylon (2 Chron. 36:5-10)
- 3) In 586 BC, when Nebuchadnezzar burned the Temple and carried off all its treasures to Babylon (2 Chron. 36:17-19)

Daniel says to count 1,290 days or years from when the daily sacrifice is taken away (v. 11). So let's do the math:

Counting 1,290 years from Nebuchadnezzar's first invasion of Jerusalem in 605–06 BC, we arrive at 685–86 AD, the year construction began on the Islamic shrine called the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount.

Counting 1,290 years from Nebuchadnezzar's second invasion in 597–99 BC, we arrive at 692 AD, the year the Dome of the Rock was completed.

Counting 1,290 "prophetic" (360-day) years from Nebuchadnezzar's third invasion in 585–86 BC, we arrive at 688 AD, the midpoint of the Dome of the Rock's construction.

That the 1,290 years point to the Dome of the Rock in all three instances is remarkable as the Islamic shrine—even before it was built—was thought to be a fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy about an abomination that causes desolation. History records that when the Islamic Caliph Omar entered Jerusalem in 639 AD, he was met by Sophronius, Bishop of the Jerusalem Church, who showed him around the city. Seeing the Temple Mount in rubble, Omar declared he was going to build a memorial to Muhammad on the original site of the Temple. Sophronius reportedly exclaimed in horror, "Verily, this is the Abomination of Desolation as spoken of by Daniel the prophet, and it now stands in the holy place." Though Sophronius was about 80 years of age, Omar had him imprisoned where the harshness of forced labor led to his death.

And so the notion that the Dome of the Rock is a fulfillment of Daniel's abomination is not new. It was stated by the Bishop of the Jerusalem Church in the early 7th century.

More evidence that the Dome of the Rock is relevant to Daniel's prophecy is a timeline of 1,260 days given in verse 7:

"And one [angel] said to the man clothed in linen ... How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? [And he said] "It shall be for a time, times, an half [1,260 days]; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished" (Dan. 12:6, 7).

According to the angel in the vision, the end will come when God has finished scattering the holy people. Counting the 1,260 days as years from the midpoint of the Dome of the Rock's construction in 688 AD, we arrive at 1948, the year in which the scattering of Israel was finished.

Thus Daniel's 1,260 years, counted from the Dome of the Rock, point to the start of the fig-tree generation.

Let that sink in.

It gets more interesting. In the closing verses of Daniel 12, a final day-count is given:

“Blessed is the one who waits for and reaches the end of the 1,335 days” (Dan. 12:12).

The insinuation is that the resurrection mentioned at the beginning of the prophecy will occur after a period of 1,335 days or years.

Counting 1,335 years from when construction began on the Dome of the Rock in 685–86 AD, we arrive at 2021.

Counting 1,335 years from when the Dome was completed in 691–92 AD, we arrive at 2027.

At this point, it should be noted that the Dome of the Rock is not the only abomination that has stood on the Temple Mount since the late 7th century. A second Islamic structure, a silver-domed mosque called Al-Aqsa, has stood at the outer edge of the Temple area since it was originally laid down and consecrated by Caliph Omar in 693 AD. The Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa together comprise what Muslims call the Noble Sanctuary, the third holiest site in Islam.

When we count the 1,335 years from 693 AD, the year in which the structures comprising the Noble Sanctuary first coexisted, we arrive at 2028.

That Daniel’s 1,335 years end in 2021 and 2028 is significant as this 7-year period corresponds to the calculated upper limit of the fig-tree generation. In Matthew 24, Jesus says the people alive to see the “fig tree” (Israel) put forth leaves will not pass away before the final tribulation-events occur (vv. 32–34). Biblically, the upper limit of a human lifespan is 80 years (Ps. 90:10). Counting 80 years from when the fig tree was replanted and began to flourish in 1948, we arrive at 2028 for the upper limit of the Tribulation. Subtracting 7 years, the presumed length of the Tribulation, we arrive at 2021.

The amazing bottom line is this: If our interpretation and numbers are correct, the tribulation-timelines in Daniel and Matthew—recorded by different authors, during different eras, and with vastly different start points—point to the same 7-year period!

[\(Click here for a chart illustrating this concurrence\)](#)

Is it possible the day-counts of 1,260, 1,290, and 1,335 have a dual application, on one hand revealing the length of the Tribulation, and on the other hand revealing when in history it will occur?

It’s a fascinating question to ponder.

NOTES:

1. The CEV translation of Daniel 12:11 reads: “There will be 1,290 days from the time that the daily sacrifices are stopped, until someone sets up the ‘Horrible Thing’ that causes destruction.”

2. In *The Coming Days of Awe*, I discuss how Bible prophecies may have multiple fulfillments that occur as “fractals” in time, having an immediate or short term fulfillment that occurs over a span of days and also a long-term or historical fulfillment that occurs over a span of years.

3. Nebuchadnezzar’s invasions of Jerusalem: <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/2-chronicles-36/>

4. Construction began on the Dome of the Rock in 685–86 AD and was completed in 691–92 AD:

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-arthistory1/chapter/dome-of-the-rock/>

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Dome-of-the-Rock>

<https://ivypanada.com/essays/the-architecture-of-the-dome-of-the-rock/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dome_of_the_Rock

5. In Daniel 12:7, the “time, times, an half” refer to a prophetic three-and-a-half-year period, equivalent to 1,260 days. The Hebrew word translated “scatter,” *naphats*, sometimes translated “shatter,” also means to “disperse” (Strong’s 5310).

6. Al-Aqsa Mosque and Noble Sanctuary:

<https://geomerid.com/en/place/al-aqsa-mosque-jerusalem-travel-attraction-359/overview/>

http://www.jmcc.org/documents/JMCCJerusalem_Population_and_Urbanization.pdf

<http://www.noblesanctuary.com/>

7. The fig tree is a symbol of Israel in Scripture (Hos. 9:10; Jer. 24:1–10; Luke 13:1–9). The only explicit biblical definition of a human lifespan is found in the Psalms: “Our days may come to seventy years, or eighty, if our strength endures; yet the best of them are but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away” (Ps. 90:10).

8. Sidenote: A prophetic timeline in Daniel chapter 9—the 70 Weeks Prophecy—may also point to 2021. In the 70 Weeks Prophecy, an order to rebuild Jerusalem initiates a countdown of 7 and 62 weeks to Messiah the Prince (v. 25). Counting the 7 and 62 weeks (483 years) from a rebuilding of Jerusalem’s walls that occurred in 1537-38 AD, we arrive at 2020-21. Counting only the 7 weeks (49 years) from 1970-71, when a modern plan to rebuild Jerusalem was first made public, we, again, arrive at 2020-21. For calculation details see the chapter entitled “Daniel’s Week’s Prophecy” in my book *Summer Is Near*.

9. Daniel 12 (complete) KJV:

12 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

² And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

³ And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

⁴ But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

⁵ Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river.

⁶ And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?

⁷ And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.

⁸ And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?

⁹ And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

¹⁰ Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.

¹¹ And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.

¹² Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.

¹³ But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.