

## SHINE LIKE THE BRIGHTNESS OF HEAVENS

Daniel 12:1-13  
Key verse 12:3

“Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.”

Through GLEF 2023, we studied the whole book of Daniel and learned his faith, life of prayer, shepherd life, and especially God’s visions shown to him. Through the first(ch7) and the second vision (ch8), we learned about God, the Sovereign Ruler of History. Indeed, God is the Alpha and the Omega who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty who is in complete control of History. (Rev 1:8)

The final but greatest vision was given to Daniel in Ch10-12. At the beginning of Ch10, Daniel was out on the bank of the great river, the Tigris. In his prayer, Daniel was deeply anguished for his people’s future. Then, God sent an angel to strengthen him and to show him the vision concerning a great war in Ch11. The vision was about near future history; how world powers and kingdoms would rise and fall through constant battles against each other. It is amazing to see how the vision had been fulfilled with 100 % accuracy in History over a span of 600 years, from the time of the Persian Empire to the time of Jesus. Furthermore, the vision reveals God’s sovereign counsel to discipline, restore and ultimately save many through the remnant.

Not only that, but the vision also foretold “the time of the end.”(11:40) At the time of the end, God’s people would suffer a lot, being severely attacked, persecuted, and humiliated. It is because the world would become the kingdoms of ungodly, evil doers, and idol worshippers. The entire world would rebel against God. This is exactly the same as the

one Jesus foretold in Mark 13. The time of the end would be such a desperate and hopeless time for the people of God especially. However, in chapter 12 the angel foretold the completely different view of the time of the end. It will be not only the time of distress, but also the time of deliverance; the time of salvation; the time to shine brightly like stars. This vision points God’s people beyond the suffering toward the great salvation, the eternal victory.

Through this bible study, we may understand God’s will and plan for world salvation in the time of the end. As a result, we may learn courageous faith to live for Jesus, to proclaim and to teach the gospel of Jesus, and to stand for Jesus in this sinful and adulterous generation; we may overcome the zeitgeist of the end times and shine like the stars, becoming shepherds, Bible teachers, and spiritual leaders for 1700 campuses in Europe.

### I. Shine like the brightness of the heavens (1-4)

Look at verse 1a. “At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then.” The phrase “at that time”, which refers to “the time of the end”, is repeated 3 times. There is coming a time of distress for God’s people. It will be so bad, so evil that nothing that has gone on before will

even come close. Though many would despair, there is God's will and plan for his people in the time of distress. What are those?

Firstly, God will deliver his people into everlasting life. (1-2) In the time of distress, God will not leave his people alone, but protect them through Michael, the great prince. Behind the physical reality we live in, God is fighting for his people in spiritual battles against evil. In this battle, we are not alone, but God is with us and fighting for us. So, we can preserve and remain resilient in the midst of distress. More than that, God will deliver his people into everlasting life. Look at verses 1b-2. "But at that time your people - everyone whose name is found written in the book - will be delivered. Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt." In John 5 Jesus also told about the time - "Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out - those who have done what is good will rise to live, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned." At the end time, everyone will rise from its grave by God's command. However, each person will face different consequences. Some will rise to everlasting life; others will rise to shame and everlasting contempt. Then, what decides who goes where? All depends on if one's name is found written in the book. Revelation 20 describes the time of the end, especially the final judgment - All humanity standing before the throne of God to be judged. There is the book of life opened - same book as in this passage. Revelation 20:15 says, "Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire." Only those whose names are found written in the book will be saved. God will deliver them from eternal death to everlasting life. However, those whose names are not found will be thrown into the lake of fire. One's destiny depends on if its name is found in the book.

Then, how can one get its name written in the book of life? It is through Jesus; it is through faith in Jesus. Our sins make us ashamed

and contemptible, and condemn us to the lake of fire. However, Jesus washes away all our sins through his blood on the cross. God made Jesus who had no sin to be sin for us, and sacrificed him as the Lamb for our sins. So, we have been made holy and righteous through Jesus' sacrifice once for all. (2Cor5:21, Heb 10:10) In this way, Jesus delivers us from death to life. John 5:24 says, "very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged, but has crossed over from death to life." Praise God! Praise our Lord Jesus who delivers us from death to everlasting life. So, the time of distress will be the time of deliverance for his people, the time to experience God's amazing grace of salvation and his power. This is the reason we can continue to dedicate our lives to Jesus and to his world mission command even in the time of distress.

Secondly, the wise will shine like the brightness of heavens. (3) Look at verse 3. "Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever." "Shine like the brightness of the heavens" or like the stars for ever and ever." What a wonderful God's promise for his people who will face all kinds of troubles and even persecutions. At the same time, it is God's great will and purpose for his people to become wise in the end times. So, through them, God would save many lives; through them, God would shine the light of life on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death. (Lk1:79)

Who are the wise? Who are those who lead many to righteousness? In the world, ungodly people may seem wise. Many are called "influencers" or "stars" such as movie stars, sports stars, music stars, Youtube or SNS influencers. I wonder why the world is still dark even though there are so many stars. They cannot lead anyone to righteousness. Rather, they can lead you to social gatherings involving activities like drinking, partying, or drug use.

On the contrary, a Bible teacher who plants one word of God with much prayer, a shepherd who serves one lost sheep with much sacrificial love and tears, a disciple who obeys one word of God - They are the wise who lead others to Jesus, our righteousness. God will bless their life of faith to shine like stars or even like the brightness of the heavens, so that many will find the way, the truth, and the life; many will find salvation in Jesus. That is God's will and purpose for his people in the end times.

In Daniel's day, it was a dark time of Jewish exile when the Israelites lost their promised land because of their sin of disobedience. Though Daniel lived among the gentiles in foreign land; though most of his own people forgot the law of God, he made a decision not to defile himself with the royal food. Though this decision put him in danger to risk his life, he did so to be a God's holy people by obeying the law. His decision of faith has shone like stars for ever and ever, and on to us. So, after Daniel Bible Study, one of us makes a decision not to defile himself with his smartphone on Sunday; another decides to pray three times a day; another decides to gather daily bread faithfully.

Daniel lived as a Bible teacher for Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar and Darius, testifying God, the Most High. He lived as a shepherd for his people, confessing their sins as his own and fighting spiritual battle in fasting prayer for his people to repent. His life of faith, life of prayer, and life of shepherd had shone like stars on his people who were in darkness, so that they could see God's hope for themselves as the remnant and endured the time of darkness. His light has led many Israelites to righteousness including Nehemiah and Ezra even.

In the 16th century, the Catholic Church had been so corrupted that the church sold indulgences for forgiveness, and also sold church positions. Holding on the authority of the word of God only, Martin Luther challenged the corrupted Church. His writings (95 Theses against the Church's practice of selling

indulgences) and His teachings (Sola Scriptura: The Bible alone is the ultimate source of Christian doctrine and practice, Sola Fide: Being righteous only through faith in Jesus Christ) sparked a movement that led to religious reform in Germany and Europe. Though he was persecuted for his faith, he never yielded even before the most powerful emperor in the medieval world. Rather, he testified, "Unless I am convicted by Scripture and plain reason, [...] my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and will not recant anything, [...] So help me God. Amen." His faith shined like the brightness of the heavens on the people living in the darkness. It changed the course of History of Germany and Europe and eventually brought the end of the Medieval Dark Ages.

43 years ago, a God's servant began the Bonn UBF ministry. Many of us are eyewitnesses how God had powerfully used this ministry as His righteous instrument for Campus Mission in Europe. As one of the witnesses, I can testify How God used this ministry like stars for a world campus mission. 1) It is because of your absolute faith and obedience of the word of God. To learn one word of God, you had held Mark 11:22 "Have faith in God" for 20 years. God had blessed such faith to raise 12 shepherd House Churches and to raise the next generation as excellent Bible Teachers and Spiritual leaders. Following your examples, our NJ has begun to hold Ez37:10 every year since 2018. Now we can see the amazing work of God among our next generations. 2) It is because of your "life together". Since 2018, I have been invited to be part of this wonderful "life together" to learn Jesus' shepherd life. Your "Life-together" ministry taught me how to practice God's love for one another and Jesus' shepherd heart for one lost sheep. Germany is truly blessed by Bonn UBF for the last 43 years through your intensive Bible Study (IBS, GLEF, Master Course), Your faith and obedience to one word of God, and your life together. You have shone like the brightness of the heavens on many and changed their lives. You are the wise who leads many to righteousness.

Our next generation has made commitment to the word of God through GLEF; One of us has made the decision to devote his life to pioneering 12 universities; Other to raise 120 spiritual leaders from Medical school by holding on Mt 6:33; Others to form 10,000 1:1 Bible Study Teams; others to pioneer M nations beginning with Turkey. Thank God for the amazing work of God among us. You are the wise! Now I understand why this room is so bright. It is because there are many true stars here. Each of may grow to be Bible Teachers, so that we may shine like stars in Germany, Turkey, Europe, America, and the whole world. This is God's will and purpose for God's people who live in the end times. As our prayer, let us shout together - Bible Germany, Bible Turkey, Bible Europe, World Mission: Bible Germany, Bible Turkey, Bible Europe, We are One Team.

Thirdly, roll up and seal the word of God. Let us read verse 4: "But you, Daniel, roll up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge." God's divine plan for salvation should be secured and protected until the end times. Satan has always tempted to change the truth of God. But here we can read this book of Daniel with confidence about God's word because Daniel kept it as exactly as what God said and handed it down to the next generation.

"Roll up and seal the word of God" is not just for Daniel, but also for us. We are challenged to compromise or change the word of God. But thanks be to God for allowing us to study the Book of Daniel several times through factual study, Group Bible Study, messages, and testimonies. In this way, we could seal the word of God in our hearts. Let us study the word of God deeply through IBS until we may inscribe the word of God in our hearts. God has placed each one of us here with a purpose to shine in darkness!

## II. Go your way till the end (5-13)

Let us look at verses 5-8. We now return to the starting point of Daniel's vision, when

Daniel was on the bank of the great river Tigris (10:4,5). He saw two others before him, one on this bank of the river and the other on the opposite bank. One of them asked the man clothed in linen, "How long will it be before these astonishing things are fulfilled?" The man clothed in linen replied, "It will be for a time, times and half a time. When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed." In the book of Daniel, "time" might be the most frustrating part to figure out what it means. Do you understand it? If you do not understand it, do not feel bad for even Daniel had trouble this time. Let us look at verse 8: "I heard, but I did not understand. So I asked, "My lord, what will the outcome of all this be?" Asking the question, Daniel wanted to know what the end of these events would be. The angel did not answer Daniel's question directly. Instead, he gave God's final instructions to Daniel in verses 9-13.

First, "Go your way till the end." Look at verse 9. "Go your way, Daniel, because the words are rolled up and sealed until the time of the end." In verse 13a, the angel said again "As for you, go your way till the end..." Like Daniel, there are so many things we want to know about the time of the end. In fact, many people love to argue over disputable matters, and even try to go beyond what God has said. However, God's purpose of giving the vision is not to bring arguments, confusions or divisions. This vision is for us to know God and to trust God, knowing his sovereign counsel.

The angel said "...because the words are rolled up and sealed until the time of the end" It means that God had already determined how to save sinners. It is through faith in Jesus, the rock cut out of the mountain, which will crush all kingdoms and bring them to the end. (2:44-45) It is through the son of Man who will come with authority, glory and sovereign power and establish the everlasting kingdom (Ch7:27). Through Jesus, God will finish transgression, put an end to sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness (Ch9:24). God's plan to save sinners through Jesus had been determined, rolled up and sealed. That is what God has determined and that is

what must take place. (Ch11:36) It will never be changed. Therefore, what Daniel needs to do is to trust God, the sovereign, instead of wondering or worrying about the end times. Rather, he should "go his way till the end."

What was His way? He lived in obedience to the law (ch1). He lived the life of prayer (ch2, ch4) He lived as the Bible Teacher and shepherd for even such stubborn gentile kings, testifying the living God. (ch5-6) He lived as a Kingdom of priests for his people (ch9,10). Regardless of the circumstances, he served the Lord wholeheartedly until that day. As for Daniel, "Go your way" means to continue to live as a Bible Teacher and shepherd for his people till the end.

Then, as for us, what does "Go your way " mean? "Study the word of God with intensive IBS; Teach the obedience to the word of God; Make disciples of all nations." These are not My idea, but what Jesus, our Lord, commanded us. Look at Mt28. "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore "Go" and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the son and of the holy Spirit, and Teaching them to obey everything I commanded you." (Mt28:18-19) That is the way Jesus command us to "Go."

Many people had worried about the UBF ministry since Dr. Samuel Lee passed away. In fact, UBF had faced many challenges and temptations. Dr. Samuel Lee and also Dr. Paul Chung, they went their way till the end, teaching the word of God and making disciples of Jesus by training and disciplining campus students. I am sure that now they are resting and they will rise to receive their allotted inheritance, the glory and everlasting life in the kingdom of God.

Congratulate Bonn UBF 43rd Pioneering Anniversary worship. "As for you, Go your way, Bonn UBF." You have experienced misunderstandings because of your absolute faith and obedience to the word of God. That fact proves that you are the wise in this time of distress. "Go your way, Bonn UBF." Continue to study the Bible through intensive IBS;

Continue to train and discipline the next generation and raise them up to be Bible Teacher; Continue to live "life-together," "life of shepherd" and "life of giving" till the end. God will surely bless you to shine like the brightness of the heavens to drive all darkness in Germany, Turkey, and Europe, and even America.

Look at verse 10-12. "Many will be purified, made spotless and refined, but the wicked will continue to be wicked. None of the wicked will understand, but those who are wise will understand. From the time that the daily sacrifice is abolished and the abomination that causes desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days. Bless is the one who waits for and reaches the end of the 1,335 days." The mystery of the end will be hidden until the last time. In the end, there are two types of people: the wicked and those who are wise. The wicked are those who do not want to understand the Word of God and the work of God. Their way leads to destruction. But those who are wise are those who meditate on the law of the Lord day and night. They will understand the way and will of God and have salvation from the power of sin and death.

Verse 10 actually is repeating 11:35. It teaches the meaning and purpose of the time of distress. The dresses are not to destroy God's people, but to make them spotless and refined, so that they may receive the kingdom of God. One thing we may not forget that that is the end. No matter how terrible time it will be, there is the end. Those who are wise will reach the end by enduring the distress.

One of the first UBF missionaries came to Germany 50 years ago at her age 22 to serve campus students. She does not retire to enjoy her old age with her grandchildren. Instead, she still goes to serve as a Bible teacher on campus. Every Time when I visit Bonn, she is the one who welcomes me even at late midnight; prepares the best place for me; checks me out so as not to miss a meal. Behind all the great work of God, she had

humbly served God and her husband. Without her, her husband could not even begin the ministry. Even more amazing, she is practically preparing to serve M mission, looking forward to the Bible Turkey. Her example tells us what it means to “reach to the end” and “go till the end”. That is possible for she has faith in God Almighty and for she is looking for the hope of the everlasting kingdom.

Let us read Ch12:3. We are living in the end days. In the world, there are so many smart,

brilliant, talented, interesting leaders like “Elon Musk” “Son” “BTS”. However, they are not the true stars. Do not be deceived by their appearances. Bible Teachers are true leaders needed in this time. Let us pray to raise Bible Teachers, shepherds, disciples of Jesus through IBS. May God raise the Next generation to be true spiritual leaders. So, Germany, Turkey, Europe may be restored as the kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Bible Germany; Bible Turkey; Bible Europe; World Mission.