

Sabbath School Today

With the 1888 Message Dynamic

Daniel

Lesson 1: From Reading to Understanding

Google has searched out, for all of us, enormous amounts of information; everybody's computer has become a university at your fingertips.

What does Daniel mean: "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" (Dan. 12:4)?

It's obvious that the "increase of knowledge" comes in "the time of the end" when the book is unsealed; so the question is, is it knowledge of what the book of Daniel means, or is it secular Google-indexed knowledge in general?

"The time of the end" is a time when God's people are blessed with an "increase of knowledge." We have traditionally understood this to be scientific and engineering knowledge, which has indeed "increased" exponentially since the end of the 1260 years of papal oppression. But in its context, verse 4 is concerned with "turning many to righteousness" and becoming "wise" for eternal life. "He that winneth souls is wise" (Prov. 11:30). This "increase" has to do with understanding the gospel!

Fear of "the time of trouble" (admittedly, will be the worst in human history) is dissipated by this "increase of knowledge"—that's more than scientific knowledge. Only "perfect love casts out fear" (1 John 4:18). In other words, the "increase of knowledge" is a clearer grasp of what the Son of God accomplished on His cross for "every man." This will be the truth that the fourth angel brings to lighten the "earth" in Revelation 18:1-4. Not only does it "cast out" fear, it also inscribes for deliverance one's name in the book of life and the book of remembrance that God keeps.

In the context of how Daniel 12 relates to the good news of Revelation 18:1-4 (lighting the earth with glory), one wonders if perhaps there is something good here that invites further study. God's people are not "holy" in and of themselves; it's Christ's righteousness, not theirs. If Daniel 12 relates to the final "loud cry" and if God's people are not "holy" of themselves, perhaps this "dispersal of the power of the holy people" has some good news in it. Ellen White, A. T. Jones, and E. J. Waggoner, all tried to tell us that when "the most precious" message of Christ's righteousness is preached to the whole world, the end will come!

Learn to "understand" the Book of Daniel. "And they that understand among the people shall instruct many" (Dan. 11:33). Here's the good news?

If you “understand” the Book of Daniel, you “will instruct many.” The God of heaven who sent Gabriel to instruct Daniel will open doors for you to communicate to others, maybe to children and teenagers, the truths of Daniel. And what happens when you do that? Here’s the answer: “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” (Dan. 12:3). You “instructing” others, and sharing the joy. The once-sealed Book is wide “open” now!

—*Paul E. Penno*

Notes:

Pastor Paul Penno’s video of this lesson is on the Internet at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6S_JZVbfhL8

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