



Palm Sunday

hosanna to the king

SMITH MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH

Senior Pastor, John T. Jicka

April 5, 2020

9:45am & 11:00am

**Livestream services available at
Smithmemorial.org**

GUESTS

We are so glad to have you worship with us through our online services! If you are a first-time guest, please consider contacting our Deacon of the Week, or a Decision Counselor. We'd love the opportunity to get to know you, and to welcome you to our church when we're able to return to corporate worship services.

Deacon of the Week

Danny Harrell – 757-565-1989

If we can minister to you this week, please call.

Decision Counselors

Dave Twining, Greg Dowell

THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

All events, gatherings, and activities for SMBC remain canceled or postponed until further notice. We pray that we can return to fellowship face-to-face very soon. Please let us know how we can be praying for you, and meeting any needs that you and your family may have in the meantime.

Beyond 2020 Campaign

Pledges to date: \$786,855.

Actual Contributions through March 29, 2020: \$750,500.

Notate "Beyond 2020" on your envelope.

THINGS TO KEEP ON YOUR RADAR

Still Here for You

It has been eerily quiet in our church over the last couple of weeks. We miss each of you dearly, and want you to know that as long as it is safe to do so, limited staff will continue to hold regular office hours. We're here to take your phone calls and emails, and to pray with you.

Many of you have made quick stops by the church just to drop off your tithe and offering to God's ministry. Your short pop-ins are so refreshing to us – almost like mini reunions!

We also want you to know that online giving has increased by as much as 136% in the last week! I know that will be encouraging to so many of you that are praying for God's church to remain focused on the mission through this time of isolation. God is so good! If you've been reluctant to give online, but would like to know how, just go to smithmemorial.org and click the green **GIVE** button!

“Sacred Marriage” Small Group Study

SMBC is excited to announce a new small group study entitled “Sacred Marriage”. If you desire to see your marriage reflect a greater measure of holiness, mutual respect, and love between you and your spouse, consider setting aside time each week to participate in this marriage-affirming study. Author Gary Thomas helps us understand one of the marriage-union's greatest purposes – leading couples in a closer relationship with Him.

Study begins April 19 at 6PM, weekly through May 24.

*Contact Shawn or Dawn Lemon for more information and to sign-up.
757-254-1061*

EASTER EVENTS

Nothing was going to stop the death, burial, and triumphant resurrection of the Son of the Most-High God! He has conquered death and the grave once and for all; and for all those that have and ever will accept His pure and holy sacrifice, we know we will live in community and harmony as a fellowship of saints.

Because He lives!

The day is also coming when we will rejoice at the reunion of our church family after this unfortunate time in our country, and throughout the world. This Easter, we may not be able to celebrate the Risen Savior in the traditional ways that we often have. But rest assured, your church family sees this as an opportunity to sing a new song before the Lord (Psalm 96:1); and with that, we're devising some pretty creative ways of making this Easter unique and special for all!

Easter is a time of celebration. Jesus did something that no one has ever done before or since. He came and died for us, then rose again three days later. We owe it to our Savior to make this Easter special even though we cannot meet physically.

We are asking each of the families in our church to send us a video sharing your favorite Easter moments, what Easter means to you, and proclaiming, "He is risen! He is risen indeed!" These videos will help us connect to each other and maybe, just maybe, we can celebrate the work of Christ together. Please make this a priority this week! You can send your videos to:

Joey.kelley@smithmemorial.org

How to Join the Family of God

If you are interested in trusting Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, or if you would like to talk with someone about a spiritual decision, we invite you to contact a decision counselor, or the deacon of the week. Their contact information is listed on the first page of the bulletin. Someone will be happy to pray with you about your next step in faith. You may also call the deacon of the week to set a time to meet and answer any questions you may have.

How to Show Your Faith: Baptism

If you have trusted Christ as your Savior and would like to make a public confession of your faith by participating in baptism, please come forward at the end of the service to let the pastor know.

We can help you prepare for your baptism.

How to Join the SMBC Family in Membership

We are excited to know you have been our guest here at SMBC and now you feel God leading you to become a member of this fellowship of believers and serve Him here.

To become an official member, we ask that you contact the church office. A trained member of SMBC will share with you our beliefs and enjoy hearing about how God has worked in your life. We look forward to talking with you about membership.

If you have questions or comments for the Elders, they can be reached at the following email: elders@smithmemorial.org

A Note from Pastor John

Would you like to go to the Holy Land in early 2021? Talk to me.
Pastor John

Daniel 11:36-12:13

Notes

There is a long chronological jump between 11:35 and 11:36. Last week, in 11:21-35 we read about the “*contemptible*” king Antiochus Epiphanes who ruled from 175-164 BC. Verse 35 ends with a reference to “*the time of the end*” that would “*come at the appointed time.*” Verse 36 starts at the beginning of the end of time.

It is helpful to remember at this point the “*seventy ‘sevens’*” of Daniel 9:24. These 490 years were “*decreed,*” by the Lord, to accomplish 6 outcomes among the Jewish people including “*anointing the Most Holy One/Anointed One/Messiah*” (Daniel 9:24-25). As prophesied in that chapter, only 483 of the 490 years were to be completed before the first coming of Christ. Seven years of that prophecy still remain for the Jewish people and those last seven years are the subject of the prophecy beginning in Daniel 11:35 and concluding with Daniel 12:13.

I. Prophecy about the Antichrist (Daniel 11:36-45)

Verses 36-45 are about a ruler who will come to power at the very end of the world—the last seven years to be exact. He’s been labeled as the antichrist (1 John 2:18). He’s the Beast out of the sea from Revelation 13 (and following) and the Man of Lawlessness of 2 Thessalonians 2. He is “antichrist” because he’s nothing like Christ. However, people will put their trust in him and look to him as if he were Christ.

The angel told Daniel about antichrist. *“He will exalt and magnify himself above every god”* (11:36a). Regarding Buddha, Allah (and the “prophet” Mohammed), the 33 million Hindu gods, Roman, Polynesian, Greek, Aztec, Norse, or any other “god” one could mention, antichrist will say, “I’m better.”

He *“will say unheard-of things against the God of gods”* (11:36b). The God of gods is our God—YaHWeH. He created the world and everything in it. He flooded the world in judgment. He called Abraham to become a chosen nation through whom He would make Himself known and bring His blessing to the world. He’s the God who gave His only Son to be the Savior of the world.

It is very hard to imagine that there could be blasphemies *“unheard-of”* at this point in history. God’s love has been rejected. His Word has been corrupted. His power has been doubted. His goodness has been profaned. His wisdom has been disparaged. Our great God has been dragged through the mud. His name and grace have been taken in vain and trampled underfoot. How could there possibly still be *“unheard-of things”* left to say against Him? Antichrist will speak effectively, successfully persuading people by stirring up their sinful natures. He will attract them by their greed, their lusts, their fears, their disappointments, their weaknesses, their anger, and their hatred. He will rally the people with his devil-empowered message of lies and the world will join in his chorus.

“He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed” (11:36). The *“time of wrath”* is the 7 years of tribulation. The clock on that seven years will begin when he signs a covenant of peace with Israel (Daniel 9:27).

He will be irreligious. *“He will show no regard for the gods of his ancestors or for the one desired by women”* (11:37). Whatever religious background from which he comes, he will reject. The *“one desired by women”* refers to those “mother gods” worshiped by women (and men) from every culture (Beltis of Bablyon, Ishtar of Assyria, Astarte of Phoencia, the Queen of Heaven of Canaan, Tanata

of Persia, Isis of Egypt, Shing Moo of China, Aphrodite of Greece, Artemis of Ephesus, Venus of Rome, Friga of Scandinavia, Amida of Japan, and everywhere “Our Lady” Mary is idolatrously worshiped).

“*Instead of them, he will honor a god of fortresses/forces*” (11:38). He will come to the point of giving honor to the “god” who empowers him. Revelation 13:2 makes it clear as crystal, “*The dragon (Satan) gave the beast (antichrist) his power...*” 2 Thessalonians 2:9 states that Satan will give antichrist the ability to “*use all sorts of displays of power through signs and wonders...*” Most of his power will be displayed through his victories in war (Rev. 13:4).

“*He will greatly honor and reward those who acknowledge him*” (11:39). Think about the sinful, lost, needy people who will be living during that time of wrath. How desperate will they be? Will they think they have any other option but to “*acknowledge him?*” They will drown their consciences to the point of being dead to any sense of right or wrong. Their leader will be pure evil, but he will train them to approve of his deeds by giving them rewards.

Verses 40-45 depict the last battles and set the table for Armageddon. All of this is specific prophecy about nations and battles in the future. The “*King of the South*” has consistently remained the king of Egypt throughout Daniel 11. The “*King of the North*” has likewise been the king of Syria. It is safe to assume that these designations would continue now into those future days. The other back and forth fighting is just something we will have to allow to unfold during the time of the tribulation. These verses about these battles do give a good foundation for better understanding Revelation 16-19 and Armageddon.

II. Prophecy about the Afterlife (Daniel 12:1-5)

“*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...*” (12:1a). This comment

about the time of the tribulation is astounding. It boggles the mind that after everything the Jews (“*your people*”) have been through in history (slavery in Egypt, forced interbreeding by the Assyrians, total destruction and captivity by the Babylonians, planned extermination by the Persians, numerous atrocities under the Greeks/Antiochus Epiphanes, killed for sport by the Romans/Nero, embattled by the Crusades, targeted by the Spanish Inquisition, systematically abused by the Czars... THEN there was Hitler and Himmler and their “final solution”), there could be something worse than these holocausts! The angel said that the tribulation time would be worse for the Jews than anything that had happened to any nation since the “*beginning.*” Jesus said the same thing and added to it. “*For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again*” (Matthew 24:21).

“*But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered*” (12:1b). “*Your people... will be delivered.*” The angel makes it very clear here that not all of the Jews will be delivered, but some definitely will be. Those “*whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered.*” Jewish racial ancestry will not be the source of salvation for anyone. Jews are saved the same way Gentiles are saved. Peter preached to the Jews, “*There is no other name under heaven, given among men whereby we must be saved*” (Acts 4:12).

For someone to find deliverance during the tribulation, his or her name is going to have to be “*found written in the book.*” Revelation 13:8 tells us about the book calling it the “*Book of Life belonging to the Lamb.*” Revelation 20:15 shows us the Book of Life being utilized. “*Anyone whose name was not found written in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire.*”

How does one get his or her name written in the Lamb’s Book of Life? This is the most important question that arises from this entire text. One must belong to Christ. One must be born again into God’s family (John 3:3). How? Everyone has sinned (Romans 3:23) and

must be forgiven for their sin (1 John 1:9). Jesus has died to atone for sin (Ephesians 1:7). If you ask Jesus to forgive you, save you, and write your name in His book, He will (Acts 2:21). Believe that Jesus came, died, and rose again for you. Confess Him as your personal Lord and you will be saved (Romans 10:9).

“Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt” (12:2). Afterlife is *“everlasting.”* If there is a truth that the devil would love to erode as much as possible, it is the truth of this word *“everlasting.”* When someone dies there is nothing else that can be done for them. Their life stands on its own. Their eternity is set forever. They made their choice as it pertains to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and they will consciously live with that choice forever. Everyone will rise up out of the dust (physical resurrection) and physically experience an *“everlasting”* afterlife.

There are only two *“everlasting”* futures – *“life”* and *“contempt.”* The contempt will come with *“shame.”* Other possible translations of the Hebrew word *“lederon”* (contempt) are *“aversion or abhorrence.”* The Word of God is clear. People will remember their opportunities to respond to the gospel and realize they were wrong to reject Christ’s offer of salvation. In utter shame, they will enter an eternity of abhorrence and contempt. They will be forever lost or perished because their names will not be found written in the book.

As we conclude our study of Daniel, the world is suffering a world-wide pandemic of Coronavirus 19. Medical personnel and first responders are risking their lives to save others. It is another day, like 9-11, when we see heroes in our midst and they most certainly deserve to be honored. In the past few days, some cities have had special times of day when the people cheer the exhausted doctors, nurses, and their teams as they go back to work, caring for the sick.

In verse 12:3 we see the heroes of heaven and we can almost hear the cheers of the angels and the saints. *“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.” Those who have led people to Christ are the stars in heaven. What they have done to rescue the perishing will be eternally celebrated in glory.

Daniel is told to “*roll up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end*” (12:4). This means that this vision and message is not for the people of Daniel’s time. It’s for the “*time of the end.*” This is highly significant when you compare the message an angel gives to John in the Revelation (22:10): “*Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this scroll, because the time is near.*” What was not meant for Daniel and the people of his time, is meant for us in our time. The time is near.

III. Prophecy about the Assurance of Life (Daniel 12:5-13)

The numbers in Daniel cause concern for readers. Let’s deal with them first. Two times in these verses, the “*man clothed in linen*” (Jesus) answers questions about the timing of the end of the tribulation before the kingdom of Christ begins.

In verse 6, one of the angels asked Jesus, “*How long will it be before these astonishing things are fulfilled?*” His concern is the end of the terrible tribulation. Jesus reaffirms what has been stated before in Daniel 7:25, “*It will be for a time, times, and half a time.*” This is understood to be 3 ½ years. The second half of the tribulation will be horrific and will have to be endured for 3 ½ years.

Daniel asked, “*My lord, what will the outcome of all this be?*” The Lord gently tells him that he doesn’t really need to concern himself with it. Then, however, Jesus elaborates on the 3 ½ years and the days soon to follow after them:

“From the time that the daily sacrifice is abolished and the abomination that causes desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days. ¹² Blessed is the one who waits for and reaches the end of the 1,335 days.

1,290 days is 3 ½ years plus 30 days. The Jews used a 360-day calendar. 1,335 days is 3 ½ years plus 75 days. In those days, after the tribulation is complete, Armageddon will be over. Jesus will have returned. Perhaps the 1,290 days is a more specific prophecy to further elaborate on the 3 ½ years. Maybe the 30 days is how long it will take to clear the battlefield. Only the Lord knows, and He isn't really saying here. The one who *waits* for just 45 more days after the 3 ½ years plus 30 days, he/she will be especially "*blessed*." I don't know why. Perhaps those 45 days will be used to gather all the tribulation believers from the far parts of the world. Whatever these extra days are for, they will be great days.

In this book we have witnessed the entirety of Daniel's life. As a boy he determined not to be defiled by new and tempting appetites. He learned to pray powerfully because his life depended on it. He studied the Scriptures to find out what God was doing. He lived as a missionary—respectfully serving pagans while showing them the power of his God. He loved and trusted God and courageously risked his life rather than be unfaithful to Him. And, as an old man, he was rewarded with prophetic visions of the near and far future.

He did have questions. He didn't really comprehend what he had been instructed to write down. In the last verse, you can feel the affection Jesus has for him. "*As for you, go your way till the end. You will rest, and then at the end of the days you will rise to receive your allotted inheritance*" (12:13).

Daniel was given a promise. He would die soon but he would rise in the end. After he rises he will receive his "*inheritance*." As it said in 12:2, "*everyone whose name is found written in the book*" will also rise to "*everlasting life*." Will you be there to see Daniel receive his reward on that day? Please don't enter your "*everlasting*" days in shame.

In Closing

We didn't know when we started this study, in January 2020, that we would finish it in the midst of a plague. Things are only beginning to become difficult as the coronavirus 19 continues to affect families, churches, communities, and nations. Our prayer is that God will soon lift it from the world.

Some have wondered why I felt convicted to continue this study when the church buildings were closed for corporate worship. The relevance of the book for this time was questioned. Shouldn't we drop everything for a topical message?

God knew. The book of Daniel was exactly what we needed to hear at this time. We all like to hear the calming words of gentle, encouraging passages. They apply for those in Christ. But God wanted us to be reminded. This world is on a divine schedule. Trials and tragedies are a part of the plan. We are not in control. He will judge the world for sin, and He will judge the church for hypocrisy. The balance of life is fragile and is now, as it has always been, in His hands. Surprising and difficult things are going to happen. His people are going to have to learn how to pray and learn to stand strong in faith. We are going to have to learn to watch for His coming deliverance. And we are going to have to learn to live like Daniel.



Smith Memorial Baptist Church
6515 Richmond Road
Williamsburg, VA
23188757-565-0476
www.smithmemorial.org