

Enduring To the End

Kevin Hay
Daniel 12
July 28, 2024

Well, I think you would agree with me when I say that this series through the Book of Daniel has been a much needed and timely reminder that our God is in control. Amen? Just to give us a quick recap of all that we've seen, you'll recall that in the first half of this book we've seen examples of God's faithfulness to His people. So, whether it's saving them from the fiery furnace or shutting the mouths of ferocious lions, the Lord has demonstrated time and time again through the first six chapters of Daniel the sovereign care that he provides for those who trust him.

But then as we've walked our way through the second half of this book, we've also seen visions from God to the Prophet Daniel about the future for His people. So in Chapter 7, we saw Daniel's first vision of the four beasts, and through it, God revealed the coming of four major world empires, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, and yet we learned that from a future form of the fourth beast, there would one day be a ruler who would rise to power on the world stage and make war against God's people, and that ruler, whom the New Testament calls the Antichrist, would prevail against the saints, as Verse 22 from Chapter 11 says, "until the ancient of days came and judgment was given for the saints of the most high, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom." So, through that first vision, the Lord really answers the question for us, where will the Antichrist come from?

But then in Chapter 8 we saw the second vision, and there, Daniel was shown a goat attacking a ram, which represented Greece conquering Medo-Persia, and from that goat of Greece, Daniel saw a horn rising up, which represented the blasphemous tyrant Antiochus Epiphanes, and yet not only did Antiochus fulfill the atrocities against the Jews in their temple which he was predicted to carry out, but we also learned from that second vision that Antiochus was merely a preview. He was simply a type of the one who comes at the end, who is the Antichrist.

Therefore, like Antiochus, the Antichrist will begin with false peace and deception, but then, as he increases in power, he will proceed to blaspheme God, bring destruction upon the Jewish people, set up an idol in the temple, and ultimately demand that he be worshiped, and so through this second vision, the Lord answers the question for us, what will the Antichrist be like?

Then we came to Chapter 9, and it was there that we saw Daniel's third vision, and in that third vision, Daniel was shown the decree of the 70 weeks, and just to make sure we all understand the purpose of that, that 70 weeks was based upon the 70 consecutive times that the Jews had disregarded the Lord's command to give their land rest. So back in Leviticus 25, the Lord had commanded, as a parallel to the seventh day as the Sabbath, that the Israelites were to give their land rest every seven years. Well, as an agricultural people, instead of obeying God, they chose the pragmatic way and they failed to give their land that seventh year of rest, and not only did

they fail to do that one time; they failed to do it 70 consecutive times, which, when you do the math, 70 times 7, that's 490 years of disobedience, and so that's where this idea of the 70 weeks comes from. It's 70 sets of seven years, which parallels God's design for the seven-day week, and that's also why, by the way, the Jews were kept in Babylonian captivity for 70 years. It was one year for each week of the transgression, and therefore, with the Jews in captivity, the Lord was giving the land the 70 years of rest he had prescribed. So, using 490 years as a scheme or structure, the Angel Gabriel revealed to Daniel in that third vision that after the first 69 of 70 weeks, or 483 years, the Messiah who would come would be cut off, which, as we know, is exactly what took place. Christ came in the flesh, took on our sins and died on the Cross. He was crucified, and yet following that crucifixion of Christ, we realized from the third vision that there's still a remaining seven years to be accounted for, and so that final prophetic week is what scripture refers to as the Tribulation. Jeremiah 30:7 refers to it as Jacob's trouble. It says there, "Alas, that day is so great there is none like it. It is a time of distress for Jacob, yet he shall be saved out of it." So the Tribulation is this time of great judgment upon the Jewish people, but for those who trust in Jesus, it will be a time of great salvation. From Daniel's third vision, we learned that there will be a prince who will be the human instrument God will to humble the Jews and bring many to repentance and saving faith in Christ. He will make a covenant with the Jews, and halfway through that seven-year period, he will put an end to the sacrifices that have learned, that Prince is the Antichrist. So, although we don't know the exact timing of his arrival, through this third vision the Lord really gives us insight to the question, when is the Antichrist coming, as we see those things occur.

So that brings us, then, to the fourth and final vision from the Book of Daniel, which is really found from Chapter 10 through our text today, which is Chapter 12, and so far, what we've learned from this vision is that there is a cosmic battle taking place in the unseen realm as Holy angels protect Israel and fight on her behalf against the fallen angels known as demons, their angelic warfare echoes into our existence.

Last week from Chapter 11, Pastor Todd did a wonderful job of walking us through the prophecies of that final of vision which span from Artaxerxes to Alexander the Great, and then from Alexander's generals to Antiochus Epiphanes, and ultimately, to the final world leader who comes at the end, the Antichrist. So, with this final vision, the Lord is answering the question for us: in light of the Antichrist's coming, how will God's people respond? How will they endure, and not only is that a general question that is being answered in our text for today, but more specifically for you as you sit there today, it's important for you personally to answer that question as well. In light of the Antichrist's coming, and as the spirit of Antichrist continues to increase both in our own nation and throughout the world as we see things like the blood and the body of Christ being mocked on the world stage at the Olympics, how will you endure to the end? As the Apostle John wrote in 1 John 2:18, "Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that Antichrist is coming, so now many Antichrists have come. Therefore, we know that it is the last hour." So as we consider that question, the Word of God is going to help us to see what

the Lord has promised to those who love Him and live for Him, and my prayer is that through it, each of us will find ourselves enduring to the end. Enduring to the end.

So that provides us with a context of this 12th chapter for Daniel. So, look with me if you will, at Verse 1. We're going to find the first of five promises found in our text, and the first one I want us to see is, **1) The Promise of National Rescue. The Promise of National Rescue.**

So, look with me at Verse 1. Our text begins, saying, "At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time, your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book."

Now, there are a couple of things we want to keep in mind as we walk our way through this passage. The first one is that the original audience and context here in Chapter 12 is the Jewish people. Right, those are Daniel's people, and therefore, many of the truths that we will find in our text will have specific application for the Jews, but they will have implications for all of God's people.

The second thing I want us to keep in mind is that this 12th chapter of Daniel is really like a preview to the Book of Revelation. So, in the immediate sense, the Lord's purpose for this fourth vision for Daniel and his people was about preparing them for what they were about to encounter over the next 500 years leading to the coming of Christ but in the ultimate sense, the reason this chapter in this book has value for us is because this is the Lord preparing all of His people for what is going to happen in the end. So, as we'll see, many of the details we find in our passage today are found in greater detail in the Book of Revelation.

So, with that in mind, our text begins by saying, "At that time," and what time is that? Well, the figure speaking here is still the same angel from back in Chapters 10 and 11. So the time period he's speaking of, as we saw in Chapter 11, Verse 40, was "at the end of time." "At the end of time." So, while the Tribulation period will be seven years, this particular period will be known as the Great Tribulation, which is the second half of that seven years, a three-and-a-half-year period when the Antichrist breaks his covenant with Israel and begins to make war upon the Jewish people. So, when that seemingly hopeless situation is happening in the physical realm, God's Word wants his people to know that hope will be found in the spiritual realm, and the source for that hope will be the Lord's protection of His people through the Angel Michael. As our text says, "Michael, the great prince who has charge of Daniel's people, will arise." So, as we saw a couple of weeks ago, Michael is an archangel of God, an angel in the highest order, and as such, one of his specific roles given to him by the Lord is to protect the Jewish people for the sake of all the elect Jews whom God will save throughout all of time.

We actually see this explained in greater detail in Revelation Chapter 12. Beginning in Verse 7 of that chapter, it describes the cosmic battle that sets the stage for this final Tribulation period. It says there, "Now war arose in Heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back, but he, the dragon, was defeated and there was no longer

any place for them in Heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent who was called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world. He was thrown down to the earth and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, 'Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come. For the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they love not their lives, even unto death.' and then notice this distinction, verse 12, "Therefore, rejoice, O Heavens and you who dwell in them." Why? Because Satan has been cast out of heaven and his demons too. "But woe to you, O Earth and Sea." Why? "Because the devil has come down to you in great wrath and he knows his time is short." So as Michael and his angels battle against the devil and his demons, they defeat them and cast them out of Heaven and onto Earth, and as they do, this brings about the Great Tribulation, which is described in our text as "a time of trouble such as never has been since there was a nation till that time." Why? Because Paul tells us in 2 Thessalonians 2:9, "The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders." Yet as demonic and catastrophic as that period will be, our text tells us that the Archangel Michael will continue to fight for God's people. He doesn't just cast him out of Heaven, but he comes down to the earth and battles them there as well, and the promise of Verse 1 says that "at that time," Daniel's people will be delivered. "Everyone whose name shall be found written in the book."

But with that in mind, it is important for us to recognize that this promise of national rescue for the Jewish people is not generally applied to every ethnic Jew. Just because they're born Jewish does not mean they receive the powerful protection of God. Rather, it is specifically for those who repent and put their faith in Jesus Christ. As our text says: "For everyone whose name shall be found written in the book," which is the Lamb's Book of Life. So, although this is not a promise that is given universally to every nation, the implication of God's protection for us today as believers living in America in the 21st century is the same one we see in Psalm 33, which says this: "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people He has chosen as His heritage. Behold: the eye of the Lord is on all those who fear Him, on those who hope in his steadfast love, that He may deliver their soul from death and keep them alive in famine. Our soul waits for the Lord." Can you say that with the psalmist today? Does your soul wait for the Lord? He is our help and our shield, for our heart is glad in Him because we trust in His holy name. Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us even as we hope in you. So, the hope of your rescue, friends, and my rescue, regardless of what God may have in store for our nation, is to find our refuge in Christ and in Christ alone, and for the Israelites who will be saved during that Great Tribulation, they will come to that realization as well.

But then that leads us to Verses 2 through 4, because during this period of cataclysmic destruction, thousands and thousands of Jews will be killed, both those who repent and believe in Jesus and those who do not, as we will see. So, the second promise of our text is **2) The Promise of Physical Resurrection, The Promise of Physical Resurrection.**

Picking up in Verse 2. "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt. 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. But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall increase." So, flowing from the Book of Life being open, the angel fast-forwards through time and tells Daniel about a future hope that is found for those whose names are written in the book, and we see this described in Revelation Chapter 20, following the rapture of the church and the seven years of Tribulation and the casting of the Antichrist, Satan and his demons into the bottomless pit. Verse 4 of Revelation 20 says, "Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also, I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the Word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands, they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years was over. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection." So, Daniel 12 looks ahead to that blessed and holy moment when those Jews who have trusted in Christ will be raised in the first resurrection and they will reign with Christ during the millennial kingdom. But you will also notice from our text in Daniel 12 that there is a second resurrection as well, because for those who reject Christ and those who persist in rebellion and die in their sins. They will also be resurrected, but it will be a resurrection of shame and everlasting contempt. Some have asked, "Well, why would an unbeliever need a resurrected body?" Well, because they will need a body that is like the burning bush from Exodus 3 that will continue to burn forever and ever but will never be consumed.

As Chapter 20 in Revelation goes on in Verse 11, "Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence, earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them, no place to hide. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. And the Book of Life was opened and the dead were judged by what was written in the books according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it. Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire as well. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire." So, my friends, for you and I, we need to understand that the promise of resurrection is not just a reality for the Jews, but it is a reality for us as well. For every single human being, there is a day of reckoning that is coming and a resurrection and you will either be resurrected to eternal glory or resurrected to eternal shame. The only difference between one and the other is one answer to this question, are you found in Christ? Are you found in Christ? Is He your refuge? Is your name written in the Book of Life? Practically speaking, are you trusting in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior today? Have you repented of your sins and placed your faith in Christ alone? If we want to be like those who are wise and we want to shine

like the brightness of the stars above for all of eternity, we will humble ourselves in the here and now before the Lord and we will cast ourselves upon Christ.

For Daniel, after hearing these words and this hope of physical resurrection, the angel tells him to "shut up the words in the book until the end of time, for many will be searching to understand when these things will come to pass." So, the idea here is that Daniel needs to preserve the words of this vision for future generations, specifically those who will begin to see these very events unfold before their eyes, and for you and I, even today, we are beneficiaries of God's preserving of His Word through people like the Prophet Daniel. So, it's at this moment in our text, after hearing these instructions to seal and preserve the vision, that something begins to happen. There's a shift and it's taking place before Daniel's eyes, and as it does, we will find the third promise from our text, which is **3) The Promise of Final Restoration. The Promise of Final Restoration.**

Picking up at Verse 5, our text continues, saying, "Then I, Daniel, looked, and behold, two others stood, one on this bank of the stream and one on that bank of the stream. And someone said to the man clothed in linen who was above the waters of the stream, 'How long shall it be till the end of these wonders?' And I heard the man clothed in linen who was above the waters of the stream. He raised his right hand and his left hand toward Heaven and swore by Him who lives forever that it would be for a time and times and half a time, and that when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end, all these things would be finished.' I heard, but I did not understand. Then I said, 'O my Lord, what shall be the outcome of these things?' He said, 'Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the end of time.'"

So, it's here that we are beckoned back, if you will, to the scene that began in Chapter 10. If you remember, when this vision started, Daniel was standing on the banks of the Tigris River when he saw the vision at the very beginning of that glorious figure who was described in very much the same way as the resurrected Christ from Revelation, and like John when he saw the vision of Christ, Daniel passed out face first into the ground. Well, here in this moment, it appears that not only has the pre-incarnate Christ appeared once again over the waters of the Tigris, but there are now two more additional angels joining them, one on the same side that Daniel is standing and one across from him, and what's interesting about this scene is that Daniel isn't the only one wondering about when these things are going to happen. As scripture says, "Angels even long to see them." In fact, one of these angels speaks to Christ above the waters and asks the question, "How long will it be until the end of these wonders?" Or in other words, how long will this Great Tribulation last? In response, the pre-incarnate Christ does something that probably seems a bit strange to us. He raises both His hands, and so what we need to understand is that during this time, to raise one right hand was much like placing your left hand on the Bible and raising your right hand in a court of law. Today we know what that indicates, right? What you're about to say is supposed to be completely true and you're promising on the Bible that it is so. But here, the pre-incarnate Christ raises not only His right hand, but He raises His left hand as well like Jesus during His earthly ministry when He would say before everything of importance, "Truly. Truly."

Amen. Amen. So, He's indicating what He's about to say is not only absolutely true, but also that it carries with it the very authority of heaven itself, and His answer is one that we've seen before. It will be for a time, meaning one year, times meaning two years, and half a time, meaning half a year, and so as we saw back in Chapter 7 Verse 25, that means that the Great Tribulation will last for three and a half years, and the end of that period will be marked by the shattering of the power of the holy people.

In other words, Israel will be brought to a place of complete and total surrender to the reality that they are insufficient within themselves. They can no longer look to other nations around them to give help because they're attacking them, and they can no longer look to themselves for their own power because the beast is too strong. So in this moment, they will finally see their great need of the help that only Almighty God can provide, and they will be genuinely humbled, and for those who are being saved, they will cry out to God finally in repentance and faith, fulfilling what Paul tells us in Romans 11, that in this way, all Israel will be saved, or for Daniel, he responds to this in much the same way that we do so often today. We want to know more, right? It's not enough to be content with only what God has provided. Tell us more. That's what Daniel's doing here. He is seeking more information, but much like the Lord said to His disciples before he ascended into Heaven, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by His own authority." And Christ here responds to Daniel in much the same way. "Go your way, Daniel," He says, "for the words are shut up and once again sealed until the time of the end." In other words, no more questions, Daniel. Our session is over. There will be a final restoration for Israel, but that is all you need to know for now. There are mysteries that will be kept hidden until the end.

But then, as we come to Verses 10 through 12, we find that the Lord in His grace does provide Daniel with both a reminder and an additional promise. So, it's there that I want us to see **4) The Promise of Spiritual Refinement. The Promise of Spiritual Refinement.**

So, if you look with me, picking up at Verse 10, the Lord says to Daniel, "Many shall purify themselves and make themselves white and be refined, but the wicked shall act wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand, but those who are wise shall understand. And from the time that the regular burnt offering is taken away and the abomination that makes desolate is set up, there shall be 1,290 days. Blessed is he who waits and arrives at the 1,335 days."

So, the Lord explains to Daniel here that in the end there will be a fundamental, marked difference between the righteous and the wicked. For the righteous, they will not be righteous on their own accord or according to their own worthiness, but rather, they will be purified, made white and refined by the Lord, and this language of refinement comes from the purification process of precious metals. One commentator said it like this, "The refining process which improves the quality of gold and silver at the same time separates out the impurities," which is the wicked. "No longer are the two indistinguishable, but only by fire can the separation be made and the metal's purity is assured." So, for those who are being purified, the Lord is going to use the Tribulation as the means to drive them to their need for Christ. In fact, we see a description

of this multitude in Revelation 7, beginning in Verse 9. It says there that "After this I looked, and behold, there was a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes with palm branches in their hands and crying out with a loud voice, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.' And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God. Then one of the elders addressed to me, says John, saying, 'Who are these clothed in white robes and from where have they come?' I said to him, 'Sir, you know,' and he said to me, 'These are the ones coming out of the Great Tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white.' According to their own works? No. 'In the blood of the Lamb."

So while the wicked continued to rebel against God during the Great Tribulation, justifying the judgments that they see happening all around them with some sort of humanistic ideology like, It must be global warming, those who are called by God begin to recognize His divine hand on every judgment, and by His grace they repent and they believe, and it's in the midst of this promise of refinement for God's true people that Daniel is provided with some very specific numbers. The Lord says that from the time when the regular burnt offering is taken away and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days. So, as we've seen from the other visions in Daniel, the Antichrist will initially make a covenant with Israel. Today we know the temple in Israel does not exist, but there are groups out there like the Temple Institute of Jerusalem that are actively striving to make that a reality, and so this vision presupposes that the rebuilding of the temple will eventually take place. So, at the midway point of this covenant with Israel, the Antichrist will take away those regular burnt offerings that they've reestablished and he will set up, like the one who came before him, Antiochus Epiphanes, the abomination of desolation. In fact, Jesus speaks of this very thing, even identifying Daniel in Matthew Chapter 24. He's sitting there on the Mount of Olives, and the disciples come to Him privately and say, "Tell us when these things will be. What will be the sign of your coming at the end of the age?" "And Jesus answered them, 'See that no one leads you astray, for many will come in my name saying, "I am the Christ," and they will lead many astray. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. And these are all but the beginnings of birth pains.'" Birth pains increase in both intensity and frequency. "Then they will deliver you up to Tribulation and put you to death and you will be hated by all nations for my namesake, and then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another, and many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold, but the one who endures to the end will be saved. And this Gospel of the Kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. So, when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the Prophet Daniel,' Jesus said, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), 'then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.'" It's go time.

So, it's at that point that the Great Tribulation, the three-and-a-half-year period, begins, and the Lord tells Daniel in our text that from that point to the end, it'll be 1,290 days. Now, what's interesting about that is when we compare it to the Book of Revelation, we find that there is a 30-day difference. Because if you're using a 30-day calendar, which the Jews would have done, not only does three and a half years give you 1,260 days, but in Revelation 1:2-3, the Lord specifically says that the Holy city Jerusalem will be trampled for 42 months, and he says, "I will grant authority to my two witnesses and they will prophesy for 1,260 days." So, the question is, what is the purpose of the additional 30 days? Well, ultimately, I can say with absolute authority, I have no idea. But one commentator has suggested that during this 30-day period, the Lord will both rebuild the city of Jerusalem and Israel and then begin to carry out the judgment of the nations. That is the separation of the sheep and the goats, which you can read about in Matthew 25. So, although we don't know for sure, I think that's very plausible in God's divine timetable. It also makes sense when we consider the second number of days that are found in our text. He says, "Blessed is he who waits and arrives at the 1,335 days." So, at that total number, that's an additional 45 from the previous, and it's also a 75-day total from the 1,260. So why might these people who make it to that full number of days be blessed? Well, once again, the same commentator has suggested that that will be the period when Christ establishes and sets up his millennial kingdom, and again, although we can't say for sure, it certainly seems plausible. In fact, the same exact language of blessing among those who have been spiritually refined is found in Revelation 20:6, where it says, "Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection. They will be priests of God and of Christ's, and they will reign with Him for a thousand years."

So, it's on the heels of that promised divine blessing that we come to the final verse of our text and to the culmination of our series through the Book of Daniel, and it's there that I want us to end by seeing **5) The Promise of Personal Rest. The Promise of Personal Rest.**

The Lord, with a gentle but affirmative declaration, speaks to 85-year-old Daniel, saying, "But go your way till the end, and you shall rest and shall stand in your allotted place at the end of days." In other words, Daniel, I know that you are worried about your people, but let me take care of them. "As for you, go your way. Continue to persevere in faithfulness. Continue to endure to the end of your days as you have thus far, and my promise to you is that you will find your rest in me, and one day you will stand in the place that I have prepared for you in my millennial kingdom."

My friends, throughout this entire Book of Daniel, we have been brought face to face with the most powerful heights of spiritual wickedness in the angelic order and the darkest depths of sin's depravity in the hearts of tyrannical rulers, but more than anything else, transcending all of that, the heights and the depths, we have seen the absolute sovereignty and faithfulness of our God. So, in the midst of the increasing chaos and evil we experience all around us, this final exhortation from the Book of Daniel simply calls us to rest. Rest in the promises of God, rest in the sovereignty of God, rest in the faithfulness of God, and rest in the love of God. The love that

was demonstrated to you when God sent His own son Jesus Christ into the world to live a perfect life that you could never live, to die the death that you deserve to die and to conquer death victoriously on your behalf. Rest in the finished work of Jesus Christ the Lord, and rest in the grace that teaches us to deny ungodliness and to persevere in the faith as we await the Lord's blessed return, and in that waiting, may we be ever reminded that the only one who is worthy of our worship is Christ the Lord.

We have heard much in this chapter about Daniel sealing the vision. Seal it up and put it away to the end of time. But may we be reminded today that there is only one who is worthy to bring all of human history and God's great plan of redemption to its ultimate and final crescendo, and we see this described beautifully in that heavenly scene of Revelation 5. An angel cries out with the question, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?" Who is worthy to open this prophecy and to embark on the end of all things? In the seeming absence of anyone who is worthy, John begins to weep loudly. But then, bursting upon the scene is the lion of the Tribe of Judah, and in that moment, Christ appears as the victorious Lamb who is slain for the sins of his people, and because of that victory, you and I can join our voices in the new song that Heaven now sings. "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood, you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priest to our God and they shall reign on the Earth... Worthy is the Lamb who is slain to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory... And blessing to Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever." And together we say- Amen. Amen. Pray with me.

Father, thank you for who you are. Thank you that you are full of mercy and grace to we who are so undeserving. We thank you for Christ. We thank you for your faithfulness to all of those who you have called to be found in him. Help us, O Lord, by your grace, to endure to the end, and as we strive to honor you in our living, help us, Lord, to rest in who you are and in all that you have accomplished for us. We pray this in Christ's name. Amen.