

# Daniel 12:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

## Analysis

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The divine response to Daniel's inquiry provides crucial hermeneutical principle: "Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." The phrase "go thy way" (lekh, לֵךְ) gently dismisses further questioning, indicating Daniel's role is faithful stewardship of received revelation, not exhaustive comprehension of all implications. The repetition of "closed up and sealed" (cf. v. 4) emphasizes that full understanding awaits appointed time when fulfillment clarifies meaning.

"Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried" describes the refining process believers undergo during tribulation. The threefold description uses metallurgical and laundry imagery: "purified" (yitbarre'u, יִתְבַּרְאוּ) suggests removing impurities like refining gold; "made white" (yitlabbenu, יִתְלַבְּנוּ) evokes bleaching garments; "tried" (yitsarfe, יִצְרָפוּ) means tested or refined through fire. These processes produce genuine faith and holiness through suffering (1 Peter 1:6-7, James 1:2-4). Persecution doesn't destroy true believers but purifies them, removing dross and strengthening genuine faith.

The contrasting statement "but the wicked shall do wickedly" indicates hardening—persecution produces opposite effects in the wicked versus the righteous. Rather than turning to God, the wicked intensify rebellion and opposition. "And none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand" reveals that spiritual illumination depends on moral character, not merely intellectual capacity.

Persistent wickedness produces spiritual blindness preventing comprehension of divine truth. Conversely, "the wise"—those fearing God and living righteously—receive spiritual insight unavailable to the proud and rebellious. This demonstrates that true understanding requires both illumination and moral transformation.

## Historical Context

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The statement that "the wise shall understand" particularly applied to believers during persecution under Antiochus IV Epiphanes (167-164 BC), when Daniel's prophecies became remarkably clear. The "abomination of desolation" (11:31) was fulfilled when Antiochus erected a pagan altar in Jerusalem's temple and sacrificed pigs. Faithful Jews recognized these events fulfilled Daniel's prophecy, strengthening their resolve to resist Hellenization despite martyrdom. Understanding God's sovereign control through prophetic fulfillment encouraged faithfulness during severe testing.

Early Christians similarly found that Jesus' life, death, and resurrection illuminated Daniel's prophecies, demonstrating Him as the Son of Man receiving eternal kingdom (7:13-14). The destruction of Jerusalem (AD 70) fulfilled prophetic warnings (9:26, Matthew 24), validating Scripture's reliability. Throughout church history, prophetic understanding has increased as fulfillment clarifies earlier predictions, confirming this verse's truth—the wise progressively understand as history unfolds according to God's revealed plan.

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## Study Questions

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1. How does understanding that tribulation purifies rather than destroys genuine faith change your perspective on present suffering?

2. What is the relationship between moral character and spiritual understanding, and how does this affect biblical interpretation?

## Interlinear Text

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|------------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| וְהִקְשָׁה יָעוֹ       | רַב־יָם          | וַיִּצְרְפוּ     | וַיַּתְּלִבֵּנוּ וְ | ! תִּבְכְּרוּ          |
| shall do wickedly      | Many             | and tried        | and made white      | shall be purified      |
| H7561                  | H7227            | H6884            | H3835               | H1305                  |
| וְהִקְשָׁה יָם         | כָּל             | יָבִינוּ:        | וְלֹא               | וְהִקְשָׁה יָם         |
| and none of the wicked | H3605            | shall understand | H3808               | and none of the wicked |
| H7563                  |                  | H995             |                     | H7563                  |
| וְהַמִּשְׁכֵּל יָם     | יָבִינוּ:        |                  |                     |                        |
| but the wise           | shall understand |                  |                     |                        |
| H7919                  | H995             |                  |                     |                        |

## Additional Cross-References

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**Revelation 22:11** (Parallel theme): He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

**Daniel 11:35** (Parallel theme): And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed.

**Hosea 14:9** (Parallel theme): Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.

**1 John 5:20** (Parallel theme): And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

**Zechariah 13:9** (Parallel theme): And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they

shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.

**John 8:47** (Parallel theme): He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

**John 7:17** (Parallel theme): If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

**Luke 24:25** (Parallel theme): Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:

**Revelation 3:18** (Parallel theme): I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

**Proverbs 1:5** (Parallel theme): A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: