

MARCH OF EMPIRE - LECTURES ON THE BOOK OF DANIEL

by Floyd Hitchcock

Copyright © 1944

By Floyd Hitchcock

CHAPTER 21

The Great Tribulation and Michael's Defense of the Children of Israel

LESSON TEXT -- -- Daniel 12:1-13

General Comments Upon World Conditions -- The Great Tribulation is Prophecied in This Last Chapter of the Book of Daniel -- At the Time of the End Michael the Arch Angel Will Rise Up in Defense of the Children of Israel -- The Truth of This Whole Chapter Applies Primarily to the Jews -- A Time of Trouble Is Ahead for the Jews But a Promise of Deliverance Has Been Given -- Why Satan Hates the Jews and Will Seek to Destroy Them -- A Promise of Resurrection -- A Reward Will Be Given to Those Who Turn Many to Righteousness -- The Revealing Angel Commanded Daniel to Seal the Truth of This Book Until the Time of the End -- The Book of Revelation Is the Key Which Opens the Book of Daniel -- Signs of the End Time -- How Long? -- The Promise to the Wise -- A Blessing Promised to Those Who Live Through the Tribulation Period -- Conclusion of March of Empire

In following the events of the war in Europe and Asia, I must say that my heart has been deeply stirred, and I have watched developments with ever increasing interest. It seems more and more as if world events are pouring themselves into the prophetic mould so that Scripture prophecy is being rapidly fulfilled. Few people realize the prophetic significance of the present world wide conflict.

In Psalm 127:1 it says, "**Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.**"

For many years GOD has been pleading in vain for men to hear and to heed the gospel. For long centuries of time GOD has pleaded with men in all nations to accept the Lord JESUS CHRIST as His SON, and as the Messiah of Israel, and as the Saviour of the World. But men everywhere have said "no" to every overture of mercy, and to every claim of the Lord JESUS CHRIST upon their lives. And now having rejected GOD the Father, GOD the SON, and GOD the Holy Spirit, and having rejected the Word of GOD and the way of salvation, as GOD arises to settle His controversy with the nations by allowing a sword to come upon them, some are asking why these things have to be. But, I am constrained to believe that because GOD has cried, and waited in vain for men to hear and heed His word, that now in these latter

days, He will not hear the cries of those who are anxious to escape the Judgments of GOD.

For after all, GOD is no respecter of persons and if we have sinned against Him, and have counted the blood of CHRIST an unholy thing, and have trampled the mercies of GOD under our feet, we do not need to expect that GOD will spare us, while He gives others to the sword, who have been guilty of these same things.

Therefore, in the face of present and impending conditions there is only one thing for men to do, and that is to repent of their sins and turn to GOD, individually, through faith in the Lord JESUS CHRIST before it is too late.

OUR LAST LESSON

The seriousness of present day conditions is well confirmed in our lesson text which is found in Daniel the 12th chapter.

This chapter contains only 13 verses. Therefore, we shall read the entire chapter before endeavoring to give an exposition of it.

In Daniel 12:1-13 it says, **"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And 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. 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. Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto Heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished. And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. 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. And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days. But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days"**

THE TIME OF THE END

We should realize first of all that this chapter is closely related to the one preceding, in which we have an account of the nature and works and military exploits of the coming Antichrist. Therefore in the first verse of our lesson text, when it says, "**And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people:**" it refers to the time yet future when Antichrist shall arise and subjugate many nations and plant the tabernacle of his palace between the seas, in the glorious holy mountain. Then, at that time it says, "**shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people** (that is for the children of Israel)."

A TIME OF TROUBLE AHEAD

We are told also in this same verse that when Michael shall stand up in defense of the children of Israel "**That there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time:**" The revealing angel also said to Daniel, "**At that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.**"

ON JEWISH GROUND

It might be well to mention here that in this verse and in the entire chapter, for that matter, we are upon Jewish ground. Therefore, the truth presented here applies primarily to them, and not to the Church. Before these events come to pass, it is expected that the Church which is the Body of CHRIST, will have been completed and raptured away to be with CHRIST as described in First Thessalonians 4:13-18. The events outlined in this chapter, therefore, will not take place until during the tribulation period, therefore, when the Antichrist goes forth to military conquest, and commits a trespass upon the Holy land by planting the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain, i.e., in Palestine at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of Israel. And then shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation.

A PROMISE OF DELIVERANCE

The time of trouble referred to here will therefore be, no doubt, the time of Jacob's trouble referred to in Jeremiah 30: and verse 7, where it says, "**Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.**" It is interesting to note that in both of these passages where it mentions this time of trouble it is promised that there shall be deliverance for the children of Israel, that is, for those whose names shall be found written in the Book.

There is no doubt a close connection between what is stated in Daniel 12:1 regarding Michael, the great prince, which standeth for the children of Israel, and what is stated in Revelation 12:7-9 where it says, "**And there was war in Heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in Heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.**" This my friends is a future

event!

WHY SATAN HATES THE JEWS

Indeed, when Satan is cast out of the atmospheric heavens which he now occupies as the prince of the powers of the air, down to the earth, the Children of Israel will need Michael, the archangel to stand up in their defense, because Satan has a special hatred of the seed of Abraham because it was of this race that JESUS was born. And since it is ordained that CHRIST shall bruise the serpent's head, Satan is at enmity with CHRIST, and with the entire Jewish race, because He knows what JESUS said was true, namely, that "Salvation is of the Jews." When he is cast out of the atmospheric heavens, therefore, down to the earth Satan will make special effort to persecute and to destroy the entire Jewish race. And that is the reason also that GOD will send Michael, the great prince, to stand in defense of the children of Israel. For if He did not do this, Satan would seek to entirely destroy them.

A PROPHECY OF THE RESURRECTION

In verses 2 and 3 of our lesson text, it says, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some of them to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

This verse introduces to us the great subject of the two resurrections, which we cannot undertake to discuss at length in our present lesson: I find that there is some dispute among Bible expositors concerning the resurrection mentioned here. While the language used here, seems to imply a bodily resurrection, some Bible expositors insist that the resurrection referred to here means a spiritual awakening among the children of Israel during the tribulation. I am rather doubtful of this interpretation, however, and would rather believe that it refers to a bodily resurrection. We know, however, from other Scriptures that there are to be two resurrections. The one is spoken of as the first resurrection, and the other as the second resurrection. And these are to be one thousand years apart, for in Revelation 20:5 and 6 it says, "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THOSE WHO ARE WISE

In the 3rd verse of our lesson text it says, "**And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever.**"

Since we are here studying tribulation truth, these words no doubt apply to a believing remnant in Israel, who shall be witnesses for the Lord at that time, and who through their testimony shall turn many to righteousness. Of course, these words can be applied to those of us who are Christians today but the interpretation of the passage belongs no doubt, to the faithful remnant of believers during the tribulation period.

THE TRUTH OF THIS BOOK WAS TO BE SEALED

We now come to the last message given to Daniel by the revealing angel.

In the 4th verse of our lesson text, the Angel said to Daniel, **"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."**

A DIFFICULT TASK

No doubt, this was a difficult thing for Daniel to do, for having come into knowledge of these things, pertaining to the march of empire during the times of the Gentiles, and the rise of the last great empire of the Gentile age; and the rise and destruction of the Antichrist, he desired, no doubt, to make these matters known unto others as they had been made known unto him. But he was not privileged to do this. GOD, however, anticipates all future needs and provides for them in His own way. And while there was no immediate need for the truth given in the Book of Daniel to be preached to those of Daniel's time, GOD knew there would be need for it later on as the time of the end would draw near. For this reason, He caused the truth contained in this book to be given to Daniel with the commandment to seal the book even to the time of the end.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION WAS NOT SEALED

This is quite in contrast to the Book of Revelation. After the truth contained in the Book of Revelation had been given to the Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos, in Revelation 22:10, John said, **"And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand."**

The Book of Revelation, therefore, was from the time it was given, an open book to be read and studied and understood by all those who would give themselves to a diligent study of its pages. And to our delight we discover that the Book of Revelation holds the key to our understanding of the Book of Daniel. In other words, the Book of Revelation helps us to understand the meaning of what is written in the Book of Daniel. The two books, therefore, complement or supplement each other, and should be studied together. We should be glad and thankful, therefore, in these closing days of the present dispensation that GOD has given to us, a means of understanding the great truths recorded in the Book of Daniel, which was for so long, a sealed book. Certainly the truth contained in the Book of Daniel is very important and throws much light upon current events in the light of Scripture prophecy. Happy is the man, therefore, who reads and comes to understand the wonderful truths which it contains.

KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED

A sign of the end-time is given in the 4th verse where it says, **"Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased."**

Certainly this verse needs little comment in order for us to see that it applies to these very days in which we live. The fact that many are running to and fro and that knowledge has been increased in a phenomenal way during the past 50 or 60 years should convince anyone that we are approaching the end of the present dispensation. For the increase of knowledge is given here as a definite sign of the end of the age.

HOW LONG? -- HOW LONG?

In verses 5 and 6 of our lesson text it says, "**Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood, other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. And one said, to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?**"

These words refer, of course, to the circumstances and to the person through whom these truths were made known to Daniel. The important statement in this passage, however, for us to consider is the question, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?"

The answer to this important question is given in the remaining portion of the chapter.

In verse 7 Daniel said, "**And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto Heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever, that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.**"

It is generally agreed that the time element referred to here when it says, "**It shall be for a time, times and an half;**" means three and one-half years. In which case, it would agree with what is stated in Daniel 7:25 concerning the Antichrist, where it says, "**And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.**"

The expression used here also implies a period of three and one half years, which is 1260 days. And the promise was that, "**When he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.**"

THE JEWISH PROBLEM

The holy people referred to here, of course, are the Children of Israel. Therefore, we see that the tribulation period is to vitally effect the Jewish race, and will continue until the power of this people has been scattered. Thus we see that, what is spoken of today as "the Jewish problem" will find its solution at the close of the tribulation period. And will be settled then, and not before that time.

THE WISE SHALL UNDERSTAND

When these things were revealed, Daniel did not seem to understand them. Therefore in verses 8-11 he said, "**And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. 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. And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.**"

THE JEWISH TEMPLE TO BE REBUILT

The 11th verse just quoted reveals that the actual time of tribulation will not begin until the Jews have rebuilt their temple in Jerusalem and shall have re-instituted their Levitical order of sacrifice. When this is done, we know that Antichrist will exalt himself in their rebuilt temple and commit the abomination of desolation by causing the daily sacrifice to be taken away. This event will mark the beginning of the actual tribulation period, which we are told here will continue for a thousand two hundred and ninety days. We know that Antichrist will continue for one thousand two hundred and sixty days. But here thirty days are added to the tribulation period.

A SPECIAL BLESSING UPON SOME

Also in verse 12 it says, "**Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five, and thirty days.**"

Here again we see that an additional 45 days have been added with the promise of special blessings to those who continue until this time. The only reason we can give for the addition of these extra days, is that a brief period of time will be required, after the official close of the tribulation period, perhaps following the Battle of Armageddon, as a period of reconstruction before the full kingdom blessings can be ushered in.

In the last verse of our lesson text, and of the Book of Daniel, the revealing Angel said to Daniel, "But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of days."

CONCLUSION

Thus, my friends, we come to the close of our study of the Book of Daniel, which has brought to our attention many great truths which are of timely interest and importance to Jews, Gentiles and Christians alike. We should be thankful to the Lord for having revealed to us through His prophet, the march of empire during the times of the Gentiles. And the outcome of world events as they will be at the close of the Gentile period. In view of what we have learned from our study of this remarkable book, and from what is now coming to pass in current events, I am thoroughly convinced that we are coming rapidly to the close of "**the times of the Gentiles,**" which will end with the awful tribulation referred to, in our lesson text

today, of which JESUS said in Matthew 24:22, "**Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.**"

AN EARNEST APPEAL

Therefore, in view of the conflict that is now raging in Europe and which threatens to engulf the nations of the whole world, and because these things which GOD has foretold us in His Word will surely come to pass, and because the coming of our Lord draweth nigh; we urge upon all men everywhere to repent of their sins and turn to GOD, through faith in the Lord JESUS CHRIST, who is truly the Son of GOD, the Messiah of Israel and the Saviour of the world. To believe in CHRIST therefore and be saved, is the only hope which any of us can have, as the shadows of this dying age deepen into earth's darkest night.

THE END

~ end of the book ~
