

Gospel Gleanings, "...especially the parchments"

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What Shall the End of These Things Be?

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. (Daniel 12:1-2)

Review

Let's take a brief look at the major themes we've seen in Daniel's "inspired diary."

1. A youth, likely around sixteen years of age, is taken away from his home and family to a strange land as a slave.
2. He refuses to forget his homeland and especially his God.
3. God promotes this faithful lad and protects him through his whole lifetime in Babylon.
4. God uses Daniel to tell Babylon's leaders their future before they live it.
5. In the process God also reveals to Daniel what lies ahead for his own beloved and beleaguered people for the next five hundred years.
6. God also reveals to Daniel that at the end of that long time of prophetic silence the greatest of all prophets, the Jews' Messiah, God Incarnate, would come exactly as promised. He even gives Daniel the precise timeline so that Daniel's people five hundred years later will know the time is "at hand."
7. God repeatedly, from that first revelation of the image of mixed metals, reveals to Daniel that He intends to "set up" His own kingdom among men, a kingdom that shall not be exclusively for Daniel's people, the Jews, but rather for all races and nations.
8. As Daniel slowly puts these major pieces of God's revelation together, he increasingly ponders an unanswered question. What about the Jews? What shall be their role in this future spiritual kingdom? Shall they survive after fulfilling their purpose in the coming Messiah? There seems to be a lingering silence to Daniel's concern about the future of his people. God has revealed amazing details of nations and of His

divine faithfulness to His promise and purpose, but He seems to remain silent as Daniel looks for answers to this question. The Bible reveals a rather consistent pattern, particularly in Genesis and the early historical books of the Bible. It records the life of people and families until these people turn stubbornly away from God and His ways. Then the Bible simply drops future records of them from its pages. How many men do you see in Genesis alone who fit this pattern? Could Daniel's own beloved people, God's beloved people in the Old Testament, so decisively turn from their God and His commandments that He would eventually drop them from His inspired record and from His favored blessings?

What next?

As we have followed the tumultuous history of the Jewish people from Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome in each of the repeated revelations in Daniel's writings, we have witnessed two things. First, the Jews did survive, albeit at times barely so, but it seems clear that God's intervening purpose intended to preserve this people so that He would fulfill His promise of Messiah, God Incarnate, through one tribe of their nation, Judah. Secondly, the Jewish people increasingly became an insignificant pawn in the hands of one world power after the other.

During our early studies, particularly the seventy week prophecy of the ninth chapter, we focused on the dispensational errors of our day, quite young ideas when considered in the light of historical Christian doctrine, beginning around 1830. Human nature seems at times drawn to extremes as if by a strong magnet. While the dispensational error has attracted the greater numbers, an equally errant idea surfaced that in many ways crashes into the opposite ditch of eschatological (end times) belief. It is usually

referred to as "preterism." While this view, not at all unlike its mirror opposite, dispensationalism, reveals a confusing variety of beliefs and degrees, the extreme view denies the historical belief in Jesus' final Second Coming and Judgment, claiming that the Second Coming actually occurred in 70 A. D. with the Roman destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the Jewish temple in that city. Moderate preterists do not embrace this error, but it is strongly promoted by those who hold to the most radical view. Interestingly, the radical preterists appeal to the writings of Philip Mauro as a champion of their belief. They appear to ignore the parts of Mauro's writings that strongly and clearly defend the central Biblical truth of the Lord's final, epochal, Second Coming, general literal resurrection, and Judgment. They will offer twisted interpretations of the Biblical passages that clearly teach the Biblical truth of the Lord's return, a literal bodily resurrection, and judgment that separates the human race into those who shall either hear, "Come ye blessed...inherit the kingdom..." or those who hear, "Depart, ye cursed..."

With the close of the eleventh chapter, the revelation to Daniel seems to leave the details of nations and their evils against the Jewish people. As the twelfth chapter opens, the theme shifts from a local, beleaguered nation, the Jewish people, to God's greater and grander purpose in final things. The preterists interpret the first two verses of Daniel the twelfth chapter as referring to 70 A. D. However, the language simply does not lend itself to such a local and temporal event. Albert Barnes, a respected Bible scholar, makes the following points regarding these verses:

That the beginning of this chapter is a continuation of the address of the angel to Daniel, is plain from a mere glance. The address ends at [Da 12:4](#); and then commences a colloquy between two angels who appear in the vision, designed to cast further light on what had been said. It will contribute to a right understanding of this chapter to remember, that it is a part of the one vision or prophecy which was commenced in Dan. 10, and that the whole three chapters Dan. 10; 11; [Da 12](#) should be read together. If Dan. 11, therefore, refers to the historical events connected with the reign of Antiochus, and the troubles under him, it would seem to be plain that this does also, and that the angel meant to designate the time when these troubles would close, and the indications by which it might be known that they were about to come to an end.

II. At the same time that this is true, it must also be admitted that the language which is used is such as is applicable to other events, and that it supposed that there was a belief in the doctrines to which that language would be naturally applied. It is not such language as would have been originally employed to describe the historical transactions respecting the persecutions under Antiochus, nor unless the doctrines which are obviously conveyed by that language were understood and believed. I refer here to the statements respecting the resurrection of the dead and of the future state. This language is found particularly in [Da 12:2-3](#): "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 forever and ever." This language is appropriate to express such doctrines as the following:

- (a) that of the resurrection of the dead - or a being raised up out of the dust of the earth;
- (b) that of retribution after the resurrection: a part being raised to everlasting life, and a part to everlasting shame;
- (c) that of the eternity of future retribution, or the eternity of rewards and punishments: awaking to everlasting life, and to everlasting shame;
- (d) that of the high honors and rewards of those who would be engaged in doing good, or of that portion of mankind who would be instrumental in turning the wicked from the paths of sin: "they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever."

It is impossible to conceive that this language would have been used unless these doctrines were known and believed, and unless it be supposed that they were so familiar that it would be readily understood. Whatever may have been the particular thing to which it was applied by the angel, it is such language as could have been intelligible only where there was a belief of these doctrines, and it may, therefore, be set down as an indication of a prevalent belief in the time of Daniel on these subjects. Such would be understood now if the same language were used by us, to whatever we might apply it, for it would not be

employed unless there was a belief of the truth of the doctrines which it is naturally adapted to convey.

III. If the angel intended, therefore, primarily to refer to events that would occur in the time of Antiochus - to the arousing of many to defend their country, as if called from the dust of the earth, or to their being summoned by Judas Maccabeus from caves and fastnesses, and to the honor to which many of them might be raised, and the shame and contempt which would await others, it seems difficult to doubt that the mind of the speaker, at the same time, glanced onward to higher doctrines, and that it was the intention of the angel to bring into view far-distant events, of which these occurrences might be regarded as an emblem, and that he meant to advert to what would literally occur in the time of the Maccabees as a beautiful and striking illustration of more momentous and glorious scenes when the earth should give up its dead, and when the final judgment should occur. On these scenes, perhaps, the mind of the angel ultimately rested, and a prominent part of the design of the entire vision may have been to bring them into view, and to direct the thoughts of the pious onward, far beyond the troubles and the triumphs in the days of the Maccabees, to the time when the dead should arise, and when the retributions of eternity should occur. It was no uncommon thing among the prophets to allow the eye to glance from one object to another lying in the same range of vision, or having such points of resemblance that the one would suggest the other; and it often happened, that a description which commenced with some natural event terminated in some more important spiritual truth, to which that event had a resemblance, and which it was adapted to suggest. Compare Introduction to Isaiah, Section 7. Three things occur often in such a case:

(1) language is employed in speaking of what is to take place, which is derived from the secondary and remote event, and which naturally suggests that;

(2) ideas are intermingled in the description which are appropriate to the secondary event only, and which should be understood as applicable to that; and

(3) the description which was commenced with reference to one event or class of events, often passes over entirely, and terminates on the secondary and ultimate events. This point will be more particularly examined on the note at the chapter.¹

While Barnes observes the link between the eleventh chapter and these verses, he wisely observes that the language in the first two verses of the twelfth chapter simply cannot be reasonably applied to a temporal event, particularly a local temporal event brought about by a human army, albeit Rome's army in her strongest era.

If Barnes is correct in his point, that God shifts His revelation to Daniel from the atrocities suffered by the Jews prior to the Incarnation to the Second Coming, do we have a Biblical precedent for similar patterns elsewhere in Scripture? What distinguishes this transition from the errant leap of the dispensational interpretation of Daniel's seventieth week? Although Daniel introduces us to Rome in his various prophecies, he does not give us the same intricate details regarding Rome's interaction with Judah that we see from the three earlier kingdoms. However, in the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24 and its counterparts in Mark and Luke) Jesus provides those missing prophetic details, focusing on Rome's assault on the nation and destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Immediately following Jesus' description of Rome's devastating assault against Judah, He transitions to the Second Coming, the next significant prophetic event that will follow 70 A. D. By 70 A. D. the New Testament church has already been set up and is advancing powerfully. What comes next after the fall of Jerusalem and the New Testament Church era? Just as Jesus outlined in His Olivet prophecy, the next prophetic event will be the Second Coming.

How does this leap across time differ from the errant imposition of the dispensational leap with the seventieth week in the Daniel ninth chapter prophecy? Several points make this distinction.

1. By the essential motif of the seventy weeks that prophecy requires a sequential measurement of time. In other prophecies God typically reveals all the prophetic details, though at times separated by long periods of time, as if they were sequential, as in the above example from the Olivet Discourse.

¹ Barnes, Albert. *Notes on the Bible*. Copied from SwordSearcher Bible Software. (Daniel 12:1)

2. The dispensational injection of an indefinite period of time not in any way a part of the seventy week prophecy ignores the context and the essential character of that prophecy.
3. In the transition from the eleventh to the twelfth chapter of Daniel we are following God's revelation to Daniel, not adding to it, altering it, or contradicting it.
4. In this pattern we are following Jesus in the Olivet Discourse with His transition immediately from the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A. D. to the Second Coming.

Although Barnes' quote is lengthy, I offer it for your consideration because of its clear and convincing case for what I believe to be the correct interpretation of these two verses. Lord willing, we shall continue this study next week.

Come quickly, Lord Jesus!

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Worship service each Sunday 10:30 A. M.
Joseph R. Holder Pastor