

***A**RISE, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.*

And the Gentiles shall come to thy light and kings to the brightness of thy rising. And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee.

The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary: and I will make the place of my feet glorious.

Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.

—ISAIAH 60

The THREE ANGELS' MESSAGES

in

The BOOK of DANIEL

By

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THE THREE ANGELS' MESSAGES IN THE BOOK OF DANIEL

We have two more studies to go in our series, and for these two studies I wish to take up with you the great message of the sanctuary in the light of the prophetic background. This afternoon we'll take up the story of the book of Daniel, and this evening we'll study a portion of the book of Revelation.

No doubt you are familiar with the statement made in Testimonies to Ministers that when we as a people better understand the books of Daniel and Revelation, we will have an entirely different religious experience. That is something we certainly need at this time. My prayer is that as we study these two books in these studies that remain, the Lord will begin to lead us into that experience.

Will you open your Bibles with me to the first chapter of the book of Daniel. This gives the key to the story of the whole book. It is fundamental in understanding any book in the Bible to know the main theme of that particular book. This is particularly true with the book of Daniel. When we understand the theme and objective of the book, it greatly simplifies our study.

"In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god." Dan. 1:1, 2.

The book of Daniel begins with the account of the armies of Babylon coming down upon Jerusalem. They destroyed the city, desolated the sanctuary, and carried God's people into captivity. Notice these three things:

1. God's kingdom was overthrown.
2. The sanctuary was desolated.
3. God's people were carried captive.

One of the captives was Daniel. You can imagine the feelings of that young man as he was carried captive into a foreign land. What do you think was foremost in his heart as he saw his native land disappearing to view? And as Daniel was down in Babylon,

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and the years passed on one by one, what did he look forward to? Why Daniel looked forward to the setting up of God's kingdom again, to the sanctuary being restored, and to God's people being delivered from captivity. This is the story of the book of Daniel.

Spiritual and Physical Desolation

In order to understand the story of the restoration, we must know the answer to these questions: Why did God allow Babylon to come down to Jerusalem? Why did He allow His kingdom to be overthrown at Jerusalem? Why did He allow the sanctuary to be desolated? Why did He permit His people to be carried captive? It was because His kingdom was already overthrown in the hearts of the people. It was because the sanctuary of the soul was already desolated by the evil one. It was because His people were already captive to Babylon, spiritually, that He permitted Babylon to come down to do these things physically among His people. So, bearing that in mind, we can see that for God's kingdom to be truly set up, in order for the sanctuary to be truly restored, in order for His people to be truly delivered from captivity, it does not just involve a physical restoration, but a spiritual one also. When God can set up a spiritual kingdom in the hearts of His people, when He can restore the sanctuary of the soul to its rightful state, when He can deliver His people from the captive power of the evil one, and has brought to His people a complete spiritual restoration and deliverance, then will come the great physical deliverance. God's kingdom will be set up. The sanctuary will be forever restored, and God's people will be delivered from the enemy forever.

Daniel Understands 70 Years

When Daniel went down to Babylon, he understood by the prophecies of Jeremiah that the Lord would accomplish a certain period in the captivity of His people and in the desolation of that sanctuary. And how many years did he understand that would be? Do you remember? Seventy years! So it seemed to Daniel that after seventy years God would restore His kingdom, restore the sanctuary, and restore His people from captivity.

While Daniel was still down there in Babylon, God gave him some visions. The first vision is recorded in Daniel 2. (The vision

was actually given to Nebuchadnezzar, and the interpretation to Daniel). At this time Daniel was still a young man. Now you know the outline of Daniel 2, the image with the head of gold, the breast and arms of silver, the thighs of brass, the legs of iron, the divided toes, and finally, the great stone coming out of the mountain without hands which smote the great image on the feet. How does the vision finally end? "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed." (v. 44) That is what Daniel looked for, wasn't it? He saw the Babylonians destroy Jerusalem and the great yearning of his heart was for the setting up of God's kingdom. The captivity took place about 606 B. C. Then when Daniel had been down in Babylon only a few years, he was taken down through the reign of four kingdoms, to the setting up of the kingdom of God. We'll see as we progress through this study that Daniel, as yet, had no conception of time. He had no idea that this was going to go on for two thousand five hundred years. Verily he thought that the setting up of God's kingdom would take place at the end of the seventy years. He thought there would be one kingdom and another kingdom, and another kingdom, and another kingdom; then God's kingdom would be restored again in the promised land.

Well, some years pass, and the next vision (Dan. 7) was given to Daniel when the seventy years were drawing to a close. This time he saw four kingdoms--the lion, the bear, the four-headed leopard, and the great non-descript beast. From this fourth kingdom there sprang ten kingdoms. Then from among these ten kingdoms there came forth the little horn which waxed exceeding great. As this peculiar horn grew in power, it uprooted three horns. Then it made war against the saints, spake great words against the Most High, wore out the saints of the Most High, and trod under foot the people of God. Daniel continued to behold its dreadful work until he saw the great judgment of God in session. The angel said to Daniel, "But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end." (ch. 7:26) The chapter ends with the setting up of God's kingdom as did chapter 2. "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." (v. 27)

The conclusion of Daniel 7 is the same as Daniel 2 but his reaction to this vision was different. "Hitherto is the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me; but I kept the matter in my heart." (v. 28) He was exceeding troubled by now because he was approaching the end of the seventy years, and he was looking for the sanctuary to be restored, God's kingdom to be set up, and His people delivered from captivity. But just at the time that he was expecting this to come to pass, God carried his mind off into the future, and what did he see? God's people captive, being trodden under foot, suffering persecution. Therefore his countenance changed within him, and he was troubled.

Daniel Faints

About two years later, another vision was given to Daniel as recorded in chapter 8. "In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, even unto me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first." (v. 1) You know the substance of this vision. He sees the ram with two horns representing Medo-Persia. Then he sees a rough goat with a notable horn between his eyes, representing Alexander coming from the west and smiting the ram. That horn was broken and out of it came four horns toward the four winds of heaven. Out of one of those divisions of Alexander's empire, grew a horn which waxed exceeding great. And this horn waxed so exceeding great that it magnified itself, even to the prince of the host, cast some of the stars (the leaders of God's people) down to the ground, and stamped upon them. Worse than that: it took the sanctuary and trod it under foot, cast it down to the ground, and set up the abomination that maketh desolate. And so a question is asked by one of the angels standing by, to Another (who is Christ), for the benefit of Daniel: "Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?" (v. 13).

In other words, How long shall this continue? How long shall this sanctuary remain desolate? How long shall God's people be trodden under foot? And the answer comes back: "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed."

The Revised Standard Version renders it, "Then shall the sanctuary be restored to its rightful state." Daniel was a Bible student. He knew that a day stood for a year. Two thousand three hundred days before the sanctuary would be restored to its rightful state!

Well, how does Daniel take this news--two thousand three hundred years before the sanctuary would be restored. Daniel had nearly arrived at the end of the seventy years, when he expected the sanctuary to be restored, God's people to be delivered from captivity, and the kingdom of God to be set up. And just when he approaches the end of the seventy years (he had spent 70 long years down there in Babylon longingly awaiting the accomplishment of the promises in Jeremiah), he was given a vision taking him more than 2,300 years in the future. Finally the angel Gabriel was sent to Daniel to give him understanding:

"And the vision of the evening and the morning [that is the 2,300 days] which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days. And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it." Da. 8: 26, 27.

Well, how did Daniel react to this vision? He was so overcome, friends, that he was sick. He couldn't attend to his work. Why was he sick? He was expecting that sanctuary to be restored, and God's people to be delivered from captivity. Yes, he read the books of Jeremiah about the 70 years captivity, but this vision implied that the restoration would be centuries in the future. He was astonished at the vision, and none understood it. As the servant of the Lord says in Prophets and Kings, he could not understand the relationship between the 70 years and the 2,300 years.

Daniel's Problem Answered

We pass now into chapter nine. The events in this chapter occurred just after Babylon was overthrown in the first year of Darius. Daniel understood the 70 years, but he didn't know about this 2300 years.

"In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: And I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments: Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee. O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him; Neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him. . . . And now, O Lord our God, that has brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast gotten thee renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly. O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us. Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. O Lord,

hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God; for thy city and thy people are called by thy name." Dan. 9:2-11, 15-19.

Why is Daniel praying? Why is he so distressed? God sent His people down into Babylon because of their sins and that they might learn repentance. Daniel expected that at the end of 70 years the Lord would deliver the people and restore the sanctuary. But in the last vision he was informed that the sanctuary would not be restored until 2,300 years in the future. It verily seemed to Daniel that God's people were not repentant enough to be delivered from captivity, and that the Lord would not fulfill His word. That is why Daniel was so distressed. That is why he confessed his sin and the sin of his people and pled before the Lord His God. "O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not." Defer not! What does this mean? "Don't delay, O Lord! Let thy face shine upon thy sanctuary! Restore the sanctuary, O Lord! Our God, forbid," he cried, "that it be 2,300 years before this sanctuary be restored again. Oh, not 2,300 years before this people come out of captivity." Daniel was greatly distressed.

"And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God; Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved; therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision." vv. 20-23.

As he was endeavoring to understand the relationship between the 70 years and the 2,300 years, Gabriel came to him, and said, [I'll paraphrase it] "Consider this vision of the 2,300 days, Daniel. You are a man greatly beloved, and I've come forth so that you might understand the relationship between the 70 years and the 2,300 years."

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of

sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times." vv. 24, 25.

Now, I'll paraphrase the significance of these words: "Daniel, don't be distressed. God has not forgotten His prophecy of the 70 years. Yes, He is going to set up His kingdom at Jerusalem once more. The sanctuary is going to be set up again, and God's people are going to be delivered from captivity at the end of the 70 years."

So Daniel knew that the promise of Jeremiah was not 2,300 years off in the future. He knew that God's word concerning the 70 years would not fail. God was to send His people back to the land of Canaan again, for a final chance, for their last period of probationary time. Seventy weeks were cut off from the 2,300 years--given to the Jewish people. They were allotted this period of time "to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness." God called the Hebrew people that through them He might reveal Himself to the world. He purposed to bring into their experience the righteousness of God, His perfection. He willed that they might finish with sin and iniquity in their experience. When they rebelled He sent them into Babylon for 70 years. He brought them out of Babylon at the end of the 70 years--He gave them another 490 years of probationary time. And here in Daniel 9, the angel even broke to Daniel the sad news that the Jewish nation would not avail themselves of their last period of grace.

"After threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself; and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week; and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the over-

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spreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." vv. 26, 27.

History is Repeated

Just as surely as Babylon came in and destroyed the sanctuary, Jerusalem, and God's people back in 606 B. C., this little horn, the Roman power, would come against Jerusalem and destroy the city and the sanctuary.

The story continues in Chapter 10. Daniel sets about to pray to the Lord again, and as he was praying, Gabriel came unto him

"And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. . . . Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days." vv. 11, 14.

Although the Jewish nation would be set aside and the sanctuary destroyed, still the angel was to take Daniel on down through the stream of time until the final accomplishment of God's great purpose--the true and final restoration of the kingdom, the sanctuary, and God's people. We have seen that the reason the kingdom was overthrown, the sanctuary destroyed, and the people carried in captivity, was because they were spiritually overthrown already in their hearts, the sanctuary of the soul was desolated. God's people were already spiritually captive to Babylon before He permitted the physical captivity. In order for God to truly set up His kingdom physically, He must first accomplish this spiritually in the hearts of His people. What happened when He brought His people out of Babylon at the end of the 70 years? Why, if the kingdom of God had been set up in their hearts and the sanctuary of the soul fully restored, if they had made an end of sin, and made reconciliation for iniquity, and had brought in everlasting righteousness; if they had been completely delivered from Babylon spiritually, there would have been no more physical captivity.

In Daniel 10-12 the story is carried forward until we see the

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final accomplishment of God's purpose. There is much material in this chapter, but we'll just look at the outline. It is clear. It commences with Medo-Persia as Daniel 8 does, then mentions Alexander's kingdom and the four divisions of Grecia. The narrative proceeds into the history of the king of the north and the king of the south.

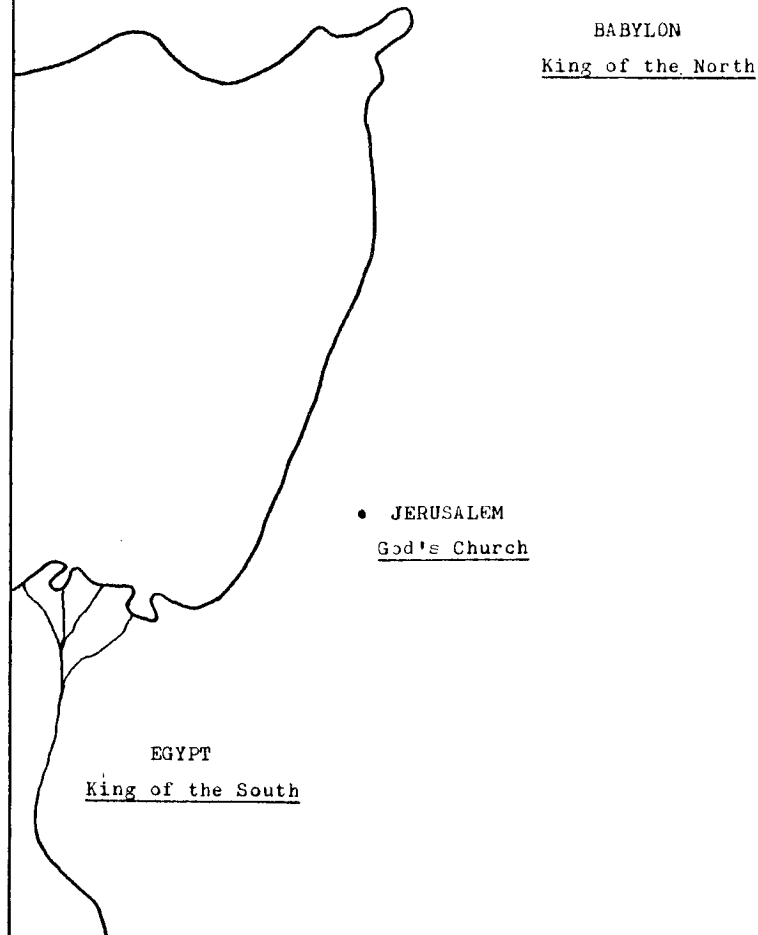
I'll just draw a brief map over here to give us a rough idea of the situation. Babylon, which was the first capital of the king of the north, was just over there to the northeast. The king of the south was down here in Egypt and the surrounding territory. Jerusalem and the glorious land was right in the center. When Alexander died the generals fought among themselves until there were two main divisions of Alexander's empire. These were called the king of the north and the king of the south. These terms were well understood by the Jewish people. For centuries, the power to the north was the great enemy of God's people. It used to be Assyria. Down toward the south they had another age-old foe, Egypt. And so it was even at this time, after the death of Alexander.

The beginning of chapter 11 depicts a great struggle between the king of the south and the king of the north. At one time the armies of the north would march down toward the south. Again the armies of the Ptolemies would march up against the kingdom of the north. Now what would you imagine was happening as these armies were going backwards and forwards, with the land of Israel right in the middle? Well, Israel was somewhat of a buffer state between the two powers.

Year after year dragged on. At times the Jews suffered at the hands of these powers, particularly, the king of the north. There was one notable king, whose name was Antiochus Epiphanes. He captured Jerusalem and caused the Jews to slay a pig on the altar of the sanctuary. He persecuted the Jews greatly. The kings of the north and south depleted their strength through warring against one another.

Meanwhile, there was another kingdom rising over here to the west, on the River Tiber. So finally Rome came down here and swallowed up all the territory in Alexander's kingdom. Notice chapter 11, verse 16:

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"But he [Rome] that cometh against him [old king of the north] shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him; and he shall stand in the glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed."

Here is a prophecy of Rome, the new power from the north, which swept down upon the land of Palestine. Daniel was given to understand that just as Babylon entered the glorious land in 606 B. C., great Pagan Rome would also sweep down through the land of Palestine and overthrow God's people.

Then the prophecy touches on the division of the Roman kingdom. Just as Alexander's empire was divided between the north and the south, there was a similar division in the Roman Empire in the days of Augustus and Mark Antony. There was another struggle between the north and the south (see verses 25-27).

We come now in the prophecy to the Christian dispensation:

"For the ships of Chittim shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have alliance with them that forsake the holy covenant. And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate." (vv. 30, 31)

What is Daniel given to understand? Isn't history being repeated? Just as ancient Babylon came down into ancient Jerusalem and destroyed the sanctuary, just as Pagan Rome came down into Jerusalem and destroyed the sanctuary, here is Papal Rome doing the same thing to the early church. The papal power threw down the great sanctuary of the Lord Jesus Christ. Why did that happen? Why did God permit this to happen to the early church? The Spirit of Prophecy points out that God's church was as verily in captivity during the 1,260 years as ancient Israel was during the 70 years. That gives us some conception of the apostasy in the early church. God punished ancient Israel by seventy years captivity into Babylon. But how long was the captivity of the Christian church? 1,260 years!

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And the prophecy continues. We know from the study of Daniel and Revelation that just after 1798 God began to visit His people in a special manner. In 1844 God delivered His people from Babylon. He delivered His people from Babylonish captivity just as He delivered His people out of Egypt and brought them to the glorious land and just as He brought them out of Babylon at the end of the 70 years to the glorious land. In 1844, (symbolically speaking), He delivered His people from the tyranny of Babylon. Once more He established for Himself a denominated people upon the earth.

"He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon." (v. 41)

So we see that right down at the end of time, when God has a people upon the earth, there is still this great conflict going on between the king of the north and the king of the south. The prophecy is not now in a Palestinian setting. The conflict commences with Babylon, Medo-Persia, Grecia, and Rome, (around the land of Palestine), but as the conflict gets near the end of time, what happens? Why, it is a world-wide conflict between the man of sin and God's people. This is the pattern in Daniel 2, 7, 8, and 11. We must understand that God is telling one story in the book of Daniel. There is a unity in the whole book. In the end of time, there is another great conflict between the king of the north and the king of the south. From ancient times the king of the north has been Satan's kingdom upon the earth.

In the time of Jeremiah we find that Babylon is the king of the north. From Isaiah it is evident that Satan is the real king of the north. He said:

"I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High." Is. 14: 13, 14.

Since the time of the end, there has been a power pushing at great Babylon, pushing back her frontiers in the world. That power is Egypt. To understand these prophecies at the end of time in Daniel, we must go to the book of Revelation. There is an Egypt pre-

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sented in Revelation 11 and very clearly identified in the Great Controversy, p. 269. Egypt is atheism. The king of the south represents the anti-God forces of this world. During the French Revolution, atheistic France was "the king of the south." Today, the same characteristics are manifested in Communism. What atheistic France did, Communist Russia is doing today. This is the atheist power that has arisen in the time of the end. What has it been doing to the Papacy? It has been pushing at the Papacy. Haven't the Christian frontiers been pushed back in the earth? Hasn't the king of the south been extending his empire over the world? That is precisely what has been happening. I don't intend to go into details how the great king of the north will recover, but it is sufficient to note that the king of the north is coming back, "like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over." (v. 40)

The great Roman power bides her time. She reads what is to be, and like a venomous serpent, when it's time for her to strike, she will strike, and that suddenly--to sweep down upon the countries that formerly acknowledged her supremacy, and to sweep the whole world into her net.

Final Conflict of the Church

Just as anciently God's people were involved in the conflict, we, as God's people are not going to escape, for we read these words in verse 41: "He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries [a supplied word] shall be overthrown." The R. S. V. says: "He shall enter into the glorious land, and tens of thousands shall fall." We are given to understand here that the great king of the north is going to sweep back to take the whole world into his net, and as he goes to overthrow the anti-God forces of the world, (Egypt, Libya, and Ethiopia), he sweeps through like a whirlwind, like an overflowing flood. Like a torrent, he goes through, and he's going to sweep right through the glorious land. The great test is coming upon the people of God. We should have some idea of the magnitude of it. These words come to my mind in Volume 5, p. 209:

"The crisis is fast approaching. The rapidly swelling figures show that the time for God's visitation has about come. Al-

though loth to punish, nevertheless he will punish, and that speedily. Those who walk in the light will see signs of the approaching peril; but they are not to sit in quiet, unconcerned expectancy of the ruin, comforting themselves with the belief that God will shelter his people in the day of visitation. Far from it. They should realize that it is their duty to labor diligently to save others, looking with strong faith to God for help."

History is going to be repeated. The great northern army is coming down upon Israel, friends, and God is going to allow it. The book of Habakkuk contains the answer as to why God will allow this to happen. We are reading now from the first chapter:

"The burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see. [H]e was looking around at the condition of His people in the glorious land and this is what he saw. Why dost thou shew me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance? for spoiling and violence are before me: and there are that raise up strife and contention. Therefore the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgment proceedeth." (vv. 1-4)

Here we find that Habakkuk is laying his complaint before the Lord about the condition of His people. Then the Lord gives him the startling answer:

"Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvelously: for I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you. For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces that are not their's." (vv. 5, 6)

Here are the Chaldeans, the Babylonians, and oh it says, "That's all right, Habakkuk, I've got things under control. Look out there and see the great northern army, the Babylonians. Well, they're going to come right through the land, just as Daniel II says, he's going to sweep into the glorious land like a whirlwind:"

"They are terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves. Their horses also are swifter

than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves: . . . They shall come all for violence; their faces shall sup up as the east wind, and they shall gather the captivity as the sand. And they shall scoff at the kings, and the princes shall be a scorn unto them: they shall deride every strong hold; for they shall heap dust, and take it." (vv. 7-10)

How did Habakkuk react to this news? Why, he saw the iniquity of his people, and when he said to the Lord, "Well, Lord, what are you going to do about the condition in Israel?" And the Lord said, "Look, I'm going to bring down the Babylonians, and they're going to sweep right through this land." Habakkuk was even more troubled then.

"Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction. . . Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?" (vv. 12, 13)

So Habakkuk is saying to the Lord, "Well, Lord, how do you do this? Fancy bringing the Babylonians down and devour your people, although they might be wicked, the Babylonians are more wicked." He couldn't see justice in that, and so he said, "Well, I'll set me upon my tower, and see what the Lord will answer."

"And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith." (ch. 2, vv. 2-4)

Trouble is coming. The northern army is to sweep through. All those whose souls are lifted up unto vanity and other sin are going to be swept aside, friends. And in that troublous time, the just shall live by faith. Now that word, "faith," is an interesting one in the original. It literally means "holding on." In this

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dark day and in this test that God is going to bring upon His people, as the northern army will sweep through, the just shall live by holding on. Now Paul uses the thought "holding on" in the book of Hebrews. "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." Hebrews 6:19. The Spirit of Prophecy shows us that our anchor must enter within the second veil. It is an anchor that will not slip in that time.

"He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps." Dan. 11: 42, 43.

All the world will wonder after the beast, the great king of the north. He will sweep down to recover his own territory, then into the glorious land, and on to Egypt, Lybia and Ethiopia. The deadly wound is healed, and all the world wonders after the beast. Great Babylon says, "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow."

At this time, when the danger and depression of the church is greatest, the just shall live by holding on. The servant of the Lord says that it appears that the church is about to fall (2SM 380). God's faithful people are at the sanctuary, their faith with Jesus, in the most holy place. For them it is "a night of trial, a night of weeping, a night of persecution for the truth's sake. But out of that night of darkness God's light will shine." COL 415.

"But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many." (v. 44). Then comes the last attempt of the king of the north to destroy God's people: "And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him." (v. 45)

We come to the climax in chapter 12, verse 1:

"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

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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."

Thus the prophecies of Daniel carry us right down through the ages, history being continually repeated, until the last conflict comes against the church of God. The church appears as if about to fall, but at that time, right at the blackest hour for God's people, the Lord accomplishes the final deliverance of His people.

Everyone shall be delivered whose name is found written in the book. When Michael stands up as it says in Revelation: "And there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." (ch. 11:15). The sanctuary is cleansed, Christ has taken the kingdom, and God's people are delivered from captivity--physically--forever.

The Time Draws Nigh

Do we believe that we are living on the threshold of the time when Michael is soon to stand up to bring an everlasting, physical deliverance to God's people? We believe that, don't we? In Revelation 11 it says, "And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come." As surely as the nations are angry today, we know in the line of that prophecy that the next event is Michael's standing up to bring complete physical deliverance to His people. But before there can come a complete physical deliverance, there must come the complete spiritual deliverance. Therefore, as surely as we have come to the time that Christ is going to stand up and bring a complete and eternal physical deliverance to His people, we must realize and recognize that we are also living in the time when He is going to bring a complete spiritual deliverance as well. The throne of God will be set up in their hearts forevermore, the sanctuary of the soul will be restored for eternity, and God's people will be delivered from the power of evil forever. We live right in that time.

God's Strategy of Final Deliverance

Now the question comes, since we are living in a time when Christ is to do this work for His people, how is the Lord going to accomplish it? How are God's people to enter into this exper-

ience? It is right here in the book of Daniel. We'll take the three predominate chapters--7, 8, and 11, and notice the focal point of each one.

This deliverance takes place in the crisis hour of earth's history. When the king of the north comes back like a whirlwind and sweeps down through the glorious land, Egypt, Lybia, and Ethiopia, God has a faithful people who are gathered together on Mt. Zion. Let us describe it this way: If you were living geographically in the glorious land in one of those little defenseless cities of Judah and you heard that the great northern armies were coming down, where would you like to be? Right up there in the city, Jerusalem, would you not? When Sennacherib came through the glorious land he overthrew all the cities of Judah except one. What was that? Jerusalem! Archeologists have found an inscription in which Sennacherib said, "Hezekiah. I have shut up like a bird in a cage." He overthrew the cities of Judah, but he didn't overthrow Jerusalem. God was there. Then he went right down and overthrew Egypt, thinking, "I'll come back later, Hezekiah's all right. I'll come back and overthrow it later." We know what happened when Sennacherib came back, don't we? The angel of the Lord intervened. Now that's a type of the deliverance of God's people. The prophecies of Daniel, Joel, Habbakuk, and Revelation show us that the great northern army is coming against God's people. We see in the events that are happening in the world today that the great test is coming. The northern army is coming down upon God's people. What are we to do? "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: . . . for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance. . . ." Joel 2: 15, 16, 32. We must recognize, friends, that we are living in the day of atonement. And there is only one way of escape from this thing that is coming upon us. The Lord sees the evils existing in His church. The faithful, like Habbakuk, are sighing and crying for the abominations in her midst. The Lord says, "I'm dealing with this, I'm bringing down the Chaldeans, and they are going to march through the breadth of the glorious land, but these will be saved who gather themselves together before the decree bring forth. Gather to Mt. Zion and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant. Let the solemn assembly be called. Let the heart be rended and not the garment." Thus, when the overflowing scourge sweeps

through, God's people are at the sanctuary.

The Judgment

What is the great focal point of Daniel 7? "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit." Dan. 7:9. It is the judgment! We must enter that judgment by faith. That is the only way of deliverance. In the crisis hour the angel comes down to deliver with great power the message to the people of God, the good news that the hour of His judgment is come. Why is it good news? Oh, we see in Daniel 7:26, "But the judgment shall sit and they shall take away his dominion." God's people know that there is only one place to get that victory when the test comes. We must not wait until it comes. We must gather ourselves together now.

When the king of the north sweeps down upon the people of God they present their petitions before the judge of all the earth. The judgment shall sit and it shall take away his dominion. Here are some of the prayers that God's people pray to the judge of all the earth for deliverance at that hour. (They are written for us in the book of Psalms).

"Plead my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me. . . . For they speak not peace: but they devise deceitful matters against them that are quiet in the land." Psalm 35: 1, 20.

Isn't that going to happen in this land of America? Isn't the wicked "Haman" coming against "Mordecai" to devise deceitful matters against them that are quiet in the land? Surely. What is the prayer of the faithful?

"Yea, they opened their mouth wide against me, and said, Aha, aha, our eye hath seen it. This thou hast seen, O Lord: keep not silence: O Lord, be not far from me. Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, even unto my cause, my God and my Lord. Judge me, O Lord my God, according to thy righteousness; and let them not rejoice over me." (vv. 21-24)

I believe, friends, that we have to learn these Psalms. These are the petitions that we must present before the great judgment for the deliverance. Let us read this one in Psalm 43:1 and also

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Psalm 54:1-3:

"Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation; O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man."

"Save me, O God, by thy name, and judge me by thy strength. Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth. For strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul: they have not set God before them. Selah."

Who are these petitions being presented to? The great Judge of all the earth!

"He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment. . . . He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor." Psalm 72: 2, 4.

What is the victory? Jesus will stand for His people who are at the judgment who are afflicting their souls before Him. He is going to save them as they present their petitions to the judgment for that everlasting deliverance. By faith they cast themselves upon the great Judge of all the earth. Jesus stands for His people. The judgment shall sit and it shall take away His dominion--Babylon's dominion, friends. It shall break in pieces the oppressor.

Victory Through the Final Atonement

Daniel 8 tells us how the dominion is taken away. It shows us how the oppressor is broken. And the central point of Daniel 8 is the cleansing of the sanctuary. Jesus has entered the most holy place to make the final atonement. "For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord." Lev. 16:30 This is not a cleansing from the guilt of sin. Oh no! We must put away all known sin before we come to the judgment. It is a cleansing from the record of sin in the books of heaven and in our minds. It is complete cleansing from the power of sin forevermore. Christ cleanses the sanctuary of the soul forever. The picture is presented in Zechariah 3:1-5:

"And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist

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him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by."

Daniel 7:26, "The judgment shall sit and they shall take away his dominion." Zechariah, "take away the filthy garments."

"As the people of God afflict their souls before him, pleading for purity of heart, the command is given, 'Take away the filthy garments from them,' and the encouraging words are spoken, 'Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with a change of raiment.' The spotless robe of Christ's righteousness is placed upon the tried, tempted, yet faithful children of God. The despised remnant are clothed in glorious apparel, never more to be defiled by the corruptions of the world." 5T 475.

Thus, when Jesus stands for His people at the judgment as they are gathered around that sanctuary casting themselves on the merits of their great High Priest, he fully takes away the dominion of sin through the cleansing blood of Christ as He makes the final atonement upon the mercy seat. That brings to God's people everlasting deliverance.

The Loud Cry

"He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. . . . He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth." Psalm 72: 4, 6.

When the sanctuary of the soul is completely cleansed we read:

"Then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people. Yea, the Lord will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I

will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen: But I will remove far off from you the northern army. . . . And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; . . ." Joel 2:18-20, 28.

As God's people gather around that sanctuary, they are judged, cleansed with the final atonement, and then filled with the Holy Ghost. The latter rain revives them from their agonizing struggle they passed through. They are sealed with the full and free gift of the Spirit. God's people then have a complete victory over Babylon. They can truly shout, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen." The seal of God is written in their foreheads. Voices can be heard proclaiming everywhere, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." (EW 279).

We'll see what happens in the final conflict as we return to Daniel 11. The king of the north has come against God's people for his final attack. Tens of thousands have been overthrown. Right at that time it says: "But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him." Dan. 11:44. There is great Babylon, just at a time when she says, "I sit a queen and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." The faithful are on Mt. Zion with the Lamb. They enter right into that judgment experience, they receive the final atonement, and they are sealed with the seal of the living God. They get the victory and they can proclaim, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen," and warn of the impending plagues about to come upon Babylon. "Tidings from the east shall trouble him" What are these tidings from the east that shall trouble him? You have it in Ezekiel 43:2 and Revelation 7:2: "The glory of the Israel came from the way of the east." "And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God."

"The mighty angel now ascending,
From the rising of the sun;
Power and glory are descending,
For the sealing has begun."

That is what troubles the man of sin, friends. That is what stirs him up with great fury. It says the tidings out of the north shall trouble him, too. With the message "Babylon is fallen, is fallen," there comes another voice from heaven, saying, "Come

out of her, my people."* That message is really given by the saints of God, but as the servant of the Lord says:

"It is impossible to give any idea of the experience of the people of God who shall be alive upon the earth when celestial glory and a repetition of the persecutions of the past are blended. They will walk in the light proceeding from the throne of God. By means of the angels there will be constant communication between heaven and earth." 9T 16

They are so closely in contact with heaven, that they speak the message with such mighty power that the message sounds as from the lips of God. "Come out of her, my people. Come out of great Babylon. Come out of the fallen churches. Come to Mt. Zion." The remnant, being filled with the Spirit, and being sealed with the seal of the living God, preach the message against Babylon with mighty power.

Armageddon

The result is depicted here:

"But tidings out of the east [the sealing] and out of the north [the loud cry] shall trouble him; therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him." Dan. 11: 44, 45.

Here is the great Babylon represented as being right down in Ethiopia (symbolically). Then comes the news from Jerusalem (north--east) that the loud cry has come. The king of the north is troubled and marches back just like Sennacherib marched back against Hezekiah with his armies, and he plants his tabernacles between the seas and the glorious holy mountain (see RSV). That place is Meggido. That is where he places his tabernacle for his last onslaught against the holy city. Can he overcome them? No! "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." Rev. 14:1 Zechariah 2 tells us that the Lord at that time will be a wall of fire about His people. Revelation 17 gives us to understand that the powers of

earth shall "make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." (v. 14) The king of the north plants his tabernacles between the seas and the glorious holy mountain for the last onslaught against God's people. This is the great battle of Armageddon.

Megiddo is first mentioned in Judges. There was a conflict between the sun-worshipping Canaanites and the Sabbath-keeping Israelites. The Lord came down and fought with His people and the sun-worshippers were defeated. So we are given to understand that in the last hours of this earth's history, as the loud cry is going forth with mighty power, every earthly support is going to be cut off from God's people. They will separate themselves from every earthly entanglement, and stand before the world as monuments of God's mercy. Although persecution rages, nothing will be able to stop the great avalanche of truth. As the message of God sweeps onward, even into the Catholic lands, the heathen lands, thousands take their stand for truth. Measures are taken against the saints. It will seem that one more strike, and the great enemy will overthrow God's people. At that time "shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people," Dan. 12:1. He stands up to smash Babylon physically, to bring physical deliverance to God's people forevermore. Why can Michael stand up? Because He has brought His people into the most holy place. He can bring them physical deliverance because the kingdom of God has been established in their hearts forever. The sanctuary of the soul has been restored to its rightful place. God's people are sealed. They are released from the power of the man of sin for eternity. Jesus can look down upon His people at the blackest hour of this earth's history, when persecution is raging, and from the least to the greatest, from the youngest to the oldest, there is not one spot nor stain upon them. The great controversy is won. The angels shout in triumph, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." When the last saint is sealed, Jesus stands up and says, "It is done." He stands up to take the sceptre. The plagues are poured out upon Babylon and her river of earthly support and her flood of persecution is dried up. Her power is smashed by the outpouring of God's wrath. Then Jesus comes with the armies of heaven to rescue His people forever.

As we behold the wonderful story of Daniel, and see the last events closing in upon us, may we indeed press around the sanctuary, knowing that our redemption draweth nigh.

RDB