

THE PROPHETIC SCRIPTURES:
What Lies Before Us?
Scripture Reading: Daniel 2:36-45
Message 11

INTRO: We left off in the last message at the end of the tribulation. The Lord Jesus and His army have conquered all resistance. The sound of war has hushed, and silence reigns on earth. It is time to begin a new era.

Now I want to briefly show you what we saw last time in the book of Daniel. You will remember that Nebuchadnezzar dreamed a dream and did not know what it meant. And how he required of his wise-men to first tell him what he had dreamed, and then the interpretation or they would all die. Well, Daniel asked the king for a bit of time, then he went to his three friends to ask for prayer and God told him both the dream and the interpretation. Then Daniel had a time of thanksgiving and set off to tell the king both what he had dreamed and what it meant. The account of the interpretation of that dream was read for us earlier (Daniel 2:36-45).

Now that statue, made of four kinds of metal spoke prophetically of the politics of the world from Daniel's time, (Nebuchadnezzar) to the millennium. The first kingdom was the kingdom of Babylon. Then came the Medes and Persians, then Greece and then Rome. We are presently in the days of the Roman empire, the legs of iron. We are not yet to the time of the 10 toes, which will happen in the tribulation. I want us to read Daniel 2:44-45. It is the fulfillment of the Rock hitting the statue in the feet that we saw in our last message.

Now what I want to point out in particular is 44a (read). God smashes all political opposition by the Lord Jesus, and then he sets up a kingdom that never ends. Maybe you say, "Well, the millennium ends." Yes it does, only to usher in with it, a kingdom that never ends, a kingdom in which the Lord Jesus forever sits on the throne of David.

D. The Millennium

1. Introduction to the millennium

I was going to give you a good amount of Old and NT evidence for the millennial kingdom. I decided

against that. However, there is one thing I would like to deal with briefly. You may say, "Listen, if this kingdom was promised all this time, and it will be a time so incredible, why does the NT not say anything about it? I want to take you through a brief NT tour on this topic.

The following are NT: Matt. 3:2; 4:17 5:5; 6:9-10; 16:28; 19:28-29; 25:31-34...; 26:29; Luke 1:32-33; 22:29-30; Acts 1:6-7; 15:13-16; Rom. 8:18-23, 9-11; Rev. 20:1-6.

And so, with that, let us read yet, Revelation 19:17-21. We have come to the beginning of the millennium. What an incredible moment this will be!

This past week I stopped in at Tompkins Mobile. It was coffee break time and the mechanics said, "Come, look at this." They called up Google Earth on the computer, and we went all over the place in a few moments. These are satellite photos of the whole world. It is absolutely incredible. As I thought about that, I thought, what will the earth look like after the tribulation? Of all the major catastrophies that will take place, the greatest to affect what it will look like is found in Revelation 16:17-21 (read).

This past week I was reading some of A.W. Tozer's writing. And he was talking about how wise God is. And he said, "Someone will come along and say, 'Oh, God is so wise huh. If God is so wise, why do we have sickness. Why such things as a holocaust. Why are some children born crippled..' and so on. "And so, if God is so wise, you explain that to me."

Then Tozer said this, and I will give you a long quote, one that is so fitting right here in our series: "Let me answer by an allegory. Let us say a man is very, very wise and is not only wise, but is rich to the point of having all the money in the world. And let us suppose he decides to build the most beautiful palace that has ever been built in the world. So in some little country, say in Europe, he gathers the finest

artists and architects, the finest designers that can be found anywhere. He combs the nations of the world, and brings them there.

"Then he says, 'I have billions of dollars to put at your disposal. Money is no object. I want the most beautiful building in all the world. I want its floors to be of gold, I want its walls to be of jasper, I want its appointments to be carved ivory. I want it to be studded with diamonds and rubies. I want it to be the epitome of all that is beautiful, all that is gracious, all that genius can create. When it is finished, I want it to be the talk of the world. I want everyone everywhere, from Broadway to Piccadilly Circus to the jungles of Africa and Borneo, to talk about that palace. Now go to work and give me the vest that you can give.'

"And, pooling their wisdom and genius, they built a most beautiful building—a building that makes the Taj Mahal look like a barn. It was beyond all possible beauty, this palace.

"Well then, let us suppose that, after a year or so, the political fortunes change and a conquering army comes in and takes over that little country. The soldiers come in and take over the place—great, tough, barbarian soldiers with hobnailed boots. They care for nothing about beauty, about art, about the diamonds and gold. Let us suppose that they stable their horses in the palace, that they spit on the floor and throw beer cans all over the place and make a wallow out of it. Eventually, the beautiful palace is filled with dirt, old rags and filth of every kind; the man who owns it and the artists who built it have fled into exile.

"While the heel of the barbarian treads down the little country, one passerby whispers to another, 'There's the great palace, the greatest concentration of universal beauty known to the world.'

"And the other person says, 'Why, it doesn't look like it to me-or smell like it! It's a pigpen! How can you say it's beautiful?'"

"Just wait for a while,' the first passerby replies. 'There's been a war and this is an occupied country. The fortunes of war will change again and the oppressor will be driven out.'

"And let us suppose that these bestial and brutal men are driven out. then the rich man comes back from some far away retreat, says to his artists, architects and sculptors, 'Let's get to work and clean this place up. We will begin at the bottom and work to the top, and put it back into shape again.'

"After a year or so of work, the palace stands once again, shining in the noonday sun-the epitome of all beauty and the essence of all that man can possibly do. And once again, all around the world, newspaper, TV and radio reporters talk about it. It is seen once more as the most beautiful thing in the world.

"Once there was someone named God-God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. He turned His mighty wisdom loose on the making of man. He said, 'Let us make man in our image' (Genesis 1:26). Then he make a garden eastward in Eden and He put man in it. He said to man, 'I will make him an help meet for him' (2:18). He put man asleep and from his side He took a rib and made a woman and said, 'This will be your mate, your wife.' And He called her Eve.

"Then Satan came into the garden and wound himself about the limbs of the tree of life. He began to whisper insinuations against God. And then the fortunes of moral war changed; Satan took over and man sinned, betraying the God who made him. That which used to be the most beautiful of all gardens and most lovely of all worlds, populated by the most radiant of all creatures, made in the image of God, now is turned into a pigpen and plunged into darkness.

"And so the critic waks about as the passerby did by the palace. And eh says, 'Are you telling me that a wise God made this pigpen?'

"But I say, 'Wait a minute. God in His great wisdom and in His providential dealings with this world has allowed foreign soldiers to occupy. And this is the epitome of all beauty, this flying ball we call earth, this glorious home of the creature made in the image of God, is now under a cloud, a shadow.' (Tozer then quotes Romans 8:19-22).

"God's wise plans will be carried out, but God in His wisdom has allowed, for a little time, this foreign occupation. The world we live in, with its cyclones, tornadoes, tempests, tidal waves and other forces of destruction, is under occupation. The soldiers of the devil march up and down in it with their hobnailed boots, their ignorance and their lack of appreciation. They catch God's beauty and destroy it."

Now, A.W. Tozer did not know it, but he wrote that for me. I would not have been able to give you a picture like that so God used Tozar. You see, this world was under occupation until we saw the Lord Jesus return and reconquer the earth for Himself.

And now we are about to enter the millennium. We are going to see the beginning of the restoration of the beautiful palace. The Lord Jesus, creator of heaven and earth will be here to oversee the rebuilding. It is the beginning of restoration. It will not yet be the final perfection, but it will be like Eden again. Glory! I wonder, are you going to be there? If you are not a Christian, at any moment you might die and if that should happen before you make the greatest decision of all, you will not be there.

And so, this morning we want to begin by looking at one of those things that will make this time period so beautiful. But before we do that, I want you to turn to Daniel 12. In this chapter we have some very important time units. We will

begin by reading 12:1-9. Now Daniel did not understand much of this and he said so. And the angel said, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed TILL the time of the end."

Well, from the 1800 until our time, these words have been opened up like never before. Let us briefly note the first time unit in verse 7 that this time is for "a time, times, and half a time." I do not wish to take time to explain how scholars have arrived at what length of time this refers to but it is 3 ½ years, which becomes abundantly clear in the book of Revelation. It is a time period of 3 and ½ years or 42 months or 1260 days.

Now notice verse 10 (read). God has opened up an understanding to the wise and they pass down to us the meaning of these things. So in verse 11 we come to our second important time unit (read). Now the time the daily sacrifice is taken away is an event that takes place when the antichrist sets himself up as God in the temple. This is the middle of the tribulation. From that time to the end of the tribulation is a time, times and a half a time, or 1260 days or 42 months.

Now the time unit we have in verse 11 is one thousand, two hundred and ninety days. That is 30 days beyond the tribulation. Why is that significant? Well, I propose to you two major events that will happen in those 30 days. We will consider those in the next message.

But there is another brief period of time mentioned in the very next verse (read verse 12). Here a blessing is pronounced upon those who come to this time and this time period extends past the tribulation by 75 days. What could this be. Well we will be considering those IN the next message, Lord willing.

CONCL: So we have prepared ourselves this morning to begin a tour of the millennium. From Genesis we learn that God made this earth beautiful and man incredibly intelligent. From Genesis we also learn that man was placed on earth for

the purpose of cultivating it and subduing the elements for man's use to bring glory to God. From Genesis we also learn that Satan brought about the downfall of man and from these he made hobnailed monsters who have turned God's glory into shame. This beautiful creation has become marred and in many places ruined by an intruder. And the god of this world has wreaked havoc upon mankind to such an extent that the beauty of what God originally created has become one huge mess.

Let me describe some of that for us. Man has become such a monster that man kills man. Man has become so depraved, that millions of beautiful babies are cruelly butchered by selfish doctors and selfish parents. Man has made man an experimental farm. Man uses the tissue of the unborn to make cosmetics. Man has turned juice into liquor and millions die because of it. Man has made drugs of plants and stupefied the minds of millions of young people and caused murder and suicide and tragedies. God's beautiful creation of a relationship between husband and wife is so shamefully abused, so perverted, so exploited as to make one wonder how God can even put up with it.

All over the world, people die because selfish man deprives them. In some countries, the unwanted increase until the city counsel decides it is time to clean up. And then they take their guns, and the unwanted die; they die by the thousands, and you and I do not even hear of it. Sin abounds on every hand so that a picture cannot be painted dark enough to describe the stain of sin in this sin sick world. I am not exaggerating. I cannot even give you a real picture of how bad it is and I'm glad I can't. The Lord Jesus has saved me and delivered me, and I do not want to know more. I know enough to know that the picture, in all reality is very very dark.

I read recently of a beautiful stained glass window. And somehow it damaged and it had a lot of cracks in it. And a glass specialist was hired and he turned the cracks into many different shapes of window, and when he was done, there it was, more beautiful than before.

I want to tell you that is going to happen here when the Lord Jesus returns to earth. Oh what a glorious time it will be. For one thousand years, it will be wonderfully glorious for the righteous. And I cannot think of a better

Scripture to conclude our introduction to this time than Romans 8:18-23 (read).

Now let me show you one thing about this passage. It is followed by this verse, "For we are saved in this hope..." The KJV says we are saved by hope. Now this verse is a dilemma to Bible scholars because its meaning is so difficult. But let me say this, no one would get saved if there were no future benefit to it, no one; absolutely no one. And for the most part, the greatest future benefit that causes us to get saved is that we will be spared from eternal hell fire. Now that is a great hope. But the greater our hope, the greater our willingness to let go of selfishness and commit ourselves to God's cause. And the problem with many is that they are content with the understanding that they are not going to go to hell. That is a shame. They have not checked and searched and mined the Word of God for truth on what it is they will receive. That is what this series of messages can do for you. It can increase your hope so that you too can say from the heart, "I groan within myself because I am so eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of the body. I can hardly wait until the rest of creation will be delivered from its bondage into the glorious liberty we will then experience. No more bloodshed. No more murder. Death hardly ever heard of. Someone who dies at 100 is a mere child. A child will play with the cobra and all will be peaceful and glorious. Oh God, hasten the day. It consumes my innermost being!"