

The Book of Daniel Part 12

Daniel 5

by Erik Olsen

--THE END OF THE FIRST KINGDOM REPRESENTED BY THE FIRST BEAST IN DANIEL'S VISION...

-historical setting of Daniel 5:

--chronological sequence of chapters in Daniel: 1,2,3 – 7,8 – 5,6 – 9,10,11,12

--Daniel is now an old man, in his mid 80s (66 years had passed since his deportation (605-539BC);

--Nebuchadnezzar died over 40 years earlier; Nabonidus, his son, succeeded him as the King of Babylon. Belshazzar, Nabonidus' son, was placed in charge of the affairs of Babylon while Nabonidus was away on extended trips.

-Belshazzar called upon Daniel to interpret the meaning of "the writing on the wall..."

--through Daniel's visions and interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's prophetic dream, Daniel had beheld in his mind's eye amazing details about the rise and fall of the four kingdoms that would dominate the earth in succession before the second coming of Christ

--now before his very eyes he is about to see the fall of the first kingdom (Babylonian) to the second kingdom (Medo-Persian)

--THE END OF THE LAST KINGDOM REPRESENTED BY THE LAST BEAST IN DANIEL'S VISION...

--the final beast will be destroyed when Christ returns...

--Dan. 7:21-22: "I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, 22 until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom..."

-the horn in this passage represents the Antichrist and is one of several horns on the head of the fourth beast

--What "writing on the wall" can we see today that warns the end is getting closer? The disciples asked Jesus this questions... He called the signs "birth pains..." (Matt. 24:8)

--Matt. 24:3-32: "As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. "Tell us," they said, "when will this happen, and **what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?**" 4 Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. 5 For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. 6 You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. 7 **Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.** There will be **famines and earthquakes in various places.** 8 All these are the beginning of **birth pains.** 9... **you will be hated** by all nations for My name's sake... 11 **many false prophets will rise up** and deceive many 12 And because **lawlessness will abound**, the love of many will grow cold. 14 And **this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations**, and then the end will come. 15 "Therefore when you see **the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet**, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), 16 "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains... .. 22 And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.... .. 32 **Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. 33 Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door.** 34 I tell you the truth, this generation [see explanation below for meaning of *generation*] will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. 35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. "

--the meaning of "this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened", based on the immediate context and Jesus' use of the same word in Matt. 12:39, is the general character of the earth's population will be "evil and adulterous" until the end.

--highlights from list of events that must happen before Christ's return, based on the Olivet Discourse in Matt. 24...

--**"there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places earthquakes in various places" (24:7)**

--according to scholars there has been a rapid increase in major earthquakes over the past few centuries. Even after accounting for the fact that as technology progresses less major earthquakes go undetected, there still seems to be a trend in the statistics:

-successive increase in earthquakes per century from the 14th – 20th centuries:
157, 174, 253, 278, 640, 2,119, 900,000

(source: "Dispatch from Jerusalem", 3rd Quarter, 1992, p.11)

-latest example: 7.6 earthquake in India last week...

--"the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet..." (24:15)

--according to Bible prophecy, at the height of the Antichrist's rise to power (the "little horn" in the head of the fourth beast in Daniel's vision) he will make a peace treaty with Israel and then break the treaty and forsake Israel (exactly the opposite of God's faithfulness!); and then he will turn the temple in Jerusalem into an instrument for the worship of himself, thus committing the "abomination of desolation"

--this event will herald the the beginning of the Great Tribulation and Christ's return shortly thereafter; Jesus warns that those in Judea at the time of the abomination of desolation to should "flee to the mountains" because of the massive destruction that will take place during the Great Tribulation... "and unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened..." (24:22)

--the reestablishment of Israel as a nation in 1948 was also a major step forward in setting the stage for the fulfillment of the abomination of desolation prophecy:

--Excerpt from theclockisticking.com: ...In 960 B.C., when King Solomon completed the first temple in Jerusalem, Israel was a dominant world power. In 586 B.C. the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem and took captive the last king of Israel. For the next 2,535 years the people of Israel survived while scattered around the world amid unparalleled persecution. During the Holocaust over 6 million Jews were killed - 2 out of every 3 living in Europe. Many who survived were impoverished and nearly starved to death. By the end of World War II, the fulfillment of God's promise to reestablish Israel as a nation in their homeland seemed more unlikely than ever; yet the prophetic clock was ticking, and the minute hand would soon strike twelve. In 1947, UN resolution #1981 partitioned Palestine, giving 18% to the Jews and making Jerusalem an "international city" never to be under Jewish control. Six months later, on May 14, 1948, Israel declared independence and made Jerusalem it's capitol. They were immediately attacked on all sides by six Arab nations. The Arab League Secretary, General Azzam Pasha declared "jihad" and said, "This will be a war of extermination and a momentous massacre..." The Jews faced this just three years after the Holocaust! In spite of being outnumbered many times over and fighting with inferior weaponry, Israel was victorious and regained the sovereignty it lost in 586 B.C.

--the reestablishment of Israel as a nation in 1948 a direct fulfillment of prophecy, (Ezekiel 34:12, 36:22-24, 36:34-35; Zechariah 7:14; Jeremiah 16:14-15; Jeremiah 23:7-8; Jeremiah 33:7)

--another major sign to look for in the future is the removal of the Muslim Dome of the Rock and the temple mount and the rebuilding of the Jewish temple there

-according to Muslim's the Dome of the Rock is where Mohommed ascended to heaven... making the temple mount the location of this smells of Satan's scheming!

--"nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom" (24:7)

--immediate context of passage and Old Testament cross-reference (Isaiah 19:1-4; II Chronicles 15:1-7) seems to indicate this phrase is an idiom that means a world-wide conflict.

--"The events of the First World War provided the impetus for the growth of the Zionish Movement, while the Second World War set the stage for the eestablishment of the State of Israel." -Arnold Fruchtenbaum, Jewish scholar

--APPLICATION QUESTION:

--Belshazzar offered Daniel riches and power as a reward for interpreting the writing on the wall, but the interpretation revealed that Belshazzar's riches and power would soon be gone. The "writing on the wall" is all around us and through the revelation of God's Word we know the interpretation. How did Daniel's knowledge of what God revealed would happen impact him? How are we impacted by the knowledge of what God has revealed will happen? *The world's ultimate loss of all its power and wealth... the return of Christ... heaven... hell...*

--see the truth behind the facade....

- see the evil and ugliness behind temptations that seem attractive
- see the spiritual destitution behind materialism
- see that the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23)

--see the abundant life of the fruits of the Spirit behind the sacrifice of taking up our cross and following Jesus!

--Mark 8:34-38: "When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 35 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. 36 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? 37 Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 38 For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."