

## **A Time of Trouble Like None Other**

Daniel 12:1

January 5, 2025

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As we begin Daniel 12, let us briefly review Daniel 11 and refresh our memory so as to better understand what is happening in Daniel 12:1.

Daniel was given a final vision by the Lord that stretches from Daniel 10 to Daniel 12. The prophetic part of this vision is found in Daniel 11-12 in which many historical events are revealed from the time of Daniel even until the end of the world.

Daniel 11 begins by identifying the ancient empires of Persia and Greece and then moves to describe the fragmentation of the Grecian Empire after the death of Alexander into four parts, focusing particularly upon the battles that were waged between the kings of Syria and the kings of Egypt (who passed dominion over the Holy Land back and forth for about 150 years until God brought deliverance through the Maccabees about 164 B.C.).

Then we come to prophecies in Daniel 11 that reveal two great enemies of God's people that have already been revealed earlier in Daniel 7 and Daniel 8—two little horns will arise to persecute and seek to destroy God's people (one Little Horn arises out of the Greek Empire and one Little Horn arises out of the Roman Empire), but in both cases God will deliver His people out of the hands of these enemies.

In Daniel 11:21-35, Antiochus Epiphanes (175-164 B.C.) is the Little Horn that arose as arch enemy of God's people out of the Greek Empire (he is the "little horn" of Daniel 8:9,20-25).

Then in Daniel 11:36ff we are introduced to the second Little Horn (he is the "little horn" of Daniel 7:8,19-27). This is the Papal King that arises out of the Roman Empire.

Thus, the chronological historical structure in Daniel 11 looks at the Persian Empire (Daniel 11:2), the Greek Empire (Daniel 11:3-35—ending with the Little Horn, Antiochus Epiphanes), and concludes with the Roman Empire (Daniel 11:30—ending with the Little Horn, the Papal King in Daniel 11:36-45).

During the reign of the Papal King, there are two Islamic invasions that would occur in history (the Saracens and the Turks) who pushed against the Papal King (Daniel 11:40-43—though the Papal King is still the main subject of these verses).

Daniel 11:44-45 moves us to another great military conflict involving the Papal King that will be fought in the Holy Land and which ultimately leads to the end of the Papal King and his kingdom (this is further described in Revelation 19:19-20).

With that brief review in mind, let's take up the following two main points: (1) The Time of Great Trouble for Israel; (2) The Salvation of Israel by Michael.

### **I. The Time of Great Trouble for Israel.**

A. "At that time" is an important time indicator (it occurs twice in this verse). At what time? At the time in which the Papal King goes forth to this great battle in the Holy Land and comes to an end (Daniel 11:44-45). Daniel Chapter 12:1 is a continuation of the battle in Daniel 11:44-45.

B. This is a very important interpretive key to understanding who this "King" is that is described in Daniel 11:36 ff.

1. I submit that at the time of Israel's great trouble (Daniel 12:1) in which Israel is attacked and overcome by a coalition of nations led by the Papal King, the Papal King will come to his end as Michael arises to defend and to save Israel (spiritually and nationally).

2. But it might be asked, could not the "King" (Daniel 11:36ff) be the pagan Roman Empire and Daniel 12:1 the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.? Did the Roman Empire come to its end at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem (or soon thereafter)? No—in fact it increased in power and extended its

kingdom/boundaries under its emperors for the next two centuries. The history does not match up to the prophecy.

C. Before looking at the salvation brought to Israel by Michael, let us consider this great time of trouble prophesied to come upon Israel?

1. **What is this great time of trouble?**

a. The Lord prophesies of some great military battle that will lead to great suffering upon an unbelieving Israel. Israel will be conquered by a confederation of nations (Zechariah 14:1-2; Joel 3). Jerusalem is not destroyed in this prophecy as happened in 70 A.D. Many in Israel are killed and many are led into captivity (though half remain in Jerusalem). I submit that these Old Testament prophecies explain what is happening in Daniel 11:44-45 when the Papal King with a coalition of nations takes control of Israel/Jerusalem.

b. Likewise, the New Testament gives us further confirmation of this interpretation of Daniel 12:1 and what this great trouble is that is yet to be brought upon Israel. Turn with me to Revelation 16:12-21 (the 6th Vial Judgment). Here we see that it is the Roman Beast (the civil beast) and the Roman False Prophet (the ecclesiastical beast—the Papal King) that are working together to call forth by means of seducing miracles the nations of the world to this great war at the Battle of Armageddon (Revelation 16:16; Joel 3—Valley of Jehoshaphat; Zechariah 12-14—Jerusalem).

2. **When is this great time of trouble that befalls Israel?**

a. It occurs after Israel has returned to the Land (for it is in Israel, Jerusalem, and the Valley of Jehoshaphat where this war occurs as noted above).

b. It occurs while Israel is yet in an unbelieving state and under God's judgment—as is presently true (Zechariah 12:9-10; Romans 11:28).

c. This prophecy was not realized in 70 A.D. at the destruction of Jerusalem. For in Zechariah 14:2, half of Jerusalem is taken into captivity and half left in Jerusalem—the city is not destroyed or depopulated as occurred in 70 A.D.

d. In Zechariah 12-14, victory is given to the Jews over these hostile nations when the Jews turn in faith to Christ, and Israel will dwell safely in the land (Zechariah 14:11). That was not true in 70 A.D.

e. Jesus did not destroy the Romans in 70 A.D. and bring all the nations of the earth under His rule (Zechariah 14:11).

D. What does it mean that this is a time “such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time” (Daniel 12:1)?

1. This is probably a proverbial saying that refers to a time of great tribulation and suffering to a people/nation (Exodus 11:6—10<sup>th</sup> plague upon Egypt; Jeremiah 30:7—probably refers to the same time of trouble as in Daniel 12:1; Ezekiel 5:8-10—the judgment brought upon Judah by the Babylonians; Matthew 24:21—the destruction of Jerusalem within that generation—all fulfilled before that generation passes away).

2. Daniel 12:1—this refers to the period of great trouble and suffering at the time of the Battle of Armageddon when Israel is conquered). Thus, there are at least 4 different time periods which this phrase or ones very similar to it are used in Scripture. This phrase means that this is a time of intense suffering for the Jews.

## II. **The Salvation of Israel by Michael.**

A. This prophecy does not end with Israel's suffering/tribulation, for Michael will stand up to bring salvation/deliverance to Israel. I will only briefly summarize what was said about the identity of Michael from a previous sermon in Daniel 10. Michael means one “who is as God”.

1. There is a divine being in the Old Testament called “the angel (messenger) of the LORD/Jehovah” who works wonders and saves His people (Hagar—Genesis 16:13; Abraham—Genesis 18-19;

Moses—Exodus 3:1-6; Joshua—Joshua 5:13-15; the Angel of the Covenant—Malachi 3:1).

2. Just as Michael is the Prince of God's people (Daniel 12:1; Daniel 10:21), so is Jesus who is Messiah, the Prince (Daniel 9:25).

3. **Objection #1: Daniel 10:13.** Michael is said to be "one of the chief princes" (Daniel 10:13), but it may also be translated "first of the chief princes" (i.e. superior to all spiritual and earthly princes, Ephesians 1:20-22).

5. **Objection #2. Jude 1:9.** If Michael, the archangel, is Jesus, why does He rebuke Satan in the name of the Lord rather than in His own name? Consider Zechariah 3:1-2.

B. Out of the midst of their great suffering/tribulation which God shall bring at that time upon Israel as judgment for their unbelief, He will graciously use that suffering to save them as they cry out to the Lord and receive Jesus as Messiah/Savior/King whom they have pierced (Zechariah 12:9-13:1). Michael/Jesus as Prince/King will miraculously destroy His enemies at that time and will bring salvation/peace to Israel and to the whole world. This is the salvation of Israel that Paul describes in Romans 11:25-27. As Paul prophesies the future conversion of Israel as a nation to become a Christian nation, so it is prophesied in Daniel 12:1 and Zechariah 12-14.

C. Application

1. Christian Zionists that falsely claim that Jews who presently follow the law and die without Christ will enter heaven are false teachers. That is not love. That is cruelty of the worst degree. That is to take away from Jews the only hope they (or any of us) have of eternal life in Christ. It is not to send them to heaven, but is to send them to hell. Israel is presently in unbelief the enemy of God (Romans 11:28), but shall yet be converted to Christ in fulfillment of God's covenant to them.

2. Let us not slight the mercy of God as Israel did and continues to do at the present time. Consider God's rich mercy to Israel in the Old Testament and especially in the New Testament in the coming of Christ to be Savior/King. As Israel rejected and persecuted God's prophets in the Old Testament, so Israel did to the apostles and to Jesus Christ in delivering Him to be crucified, and Israel continues to reject God's mercy. God's mercy was refused, God's judgment fell upon Israel in the destruction of Jerusalem and her subsequent history (and even now Israel fights for her very existence). This is due to Israel's rejection of God's mercy in Christ.

3. Israel will not have to pull mercy from God as if the Lord is reluctant to give it. Mercy cannot be pulled from God—it is freely given to those who are undeserving of it. That's what mercy is. Do not think you have sinned away God's mercy. Israel is a standing testimony and trophy of God's mercy. As we grow to love God's mercy to us, let us also grow to extend it to one another—not on the basis of what one deserves, but simply because of God's mercy to us. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

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