

Article of the Month – March 2012

Missions & Eschatology (4) – Daniel

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The eschatological expectation of world missions is the coming Kingdom of God, ruled by Jesus Christ and His glorified Church: the saints of all times and all places, representing ‘every nation, tribe, people and language’.¹ Daniel and his friends were on a cross-cultural mission to the Babylonians. This was quite a step further than where Israel had been before, in being an example to the nations, with the exception maybe, of David’s and Solomon’s glory-years. Therefore, all prophetic, apocalyptic and eschatological elements we find in the book of Daniel² should be looked at in the perspective of NT revelation and with that, discover their meaning for missionaries of the last days, especially since Daniel says that ‘in the end of time knowledge will increase’.³

Although parts in this 2nd half of the book are not too difficult to understand because keys for interpretation are given, there are also passages that are harder. The core of these may well be the prophecy about the ‘seventy sevens’,⁴ divided into 7, 62 and 1 week of 7 years each, the last being divided into two. Some keys I would like to highlight here:

Firstly, Daniel and his friends are a *type* of the Body of Christ: they were a stabilizing factor in the midst of a turbulent sea of secular, idolatrous life in the context of an ethnic melting-pot – and came forth as undisputed victors. Daniel saw a new, post-Babylonian kingdom appear under leadership of Darius the Mede that can be seen as a type of the Kingdom of God, coming to bloom in its millennial expression on earth. This makes Darius a type of Jesus Christ in His *second* coming.

This typology points *forward* to the actual big event, the fall of Babylon the Great,⁵ followed by the appearance of Jesus Christ, the rider on the white horse with His followers.⁶ It is also significant that Darius the Mede became king *at the age of 62*.⁷ In this he is a type of Jesus Christ in His *first* coming: there were 62 generations between Adam and Christ, 10 from Adam to Noah, 10 from Noah to Abraham, 14 from Abraham to David, 14 from David until the exile and 14 from the exile to Christ.⁸

¹ Rev. 7:9

² Mainly chapters 7-12

³ 12:4

⁴ 9:24-27

⁵ Rev. 17 & 18

⁶ 19:11-16

⁷ Dan. 5:30

⁸ Matt. 1:17; see also: Bailey, *Daniel*, 1993:54,56

In the conspiracy against Daniel,⁹ a type can be seen of the insurrection against the people of God at the end of the Millennium, after the devil has been released.¹⁰ As judgment over all Daniel's enemies was made certain by Darius, so Christ will make certain that after this final satanic revolution, He will forever do away with all trouble.

Secondly, there are some significant *Messianic* passages: one speaks of Christ's second coming and another of Him in His pre-incarnate state¹¹ as Sender of Gabriel to interpret the vision that Daniel saw.¹²

Thirdly, we see prophecies about the *activities* of *Antichrist*. If we compare the mentioning of the little horn with the big mouth¹³ with the corresponding verses in Revelation¹⁴ (the final judgment over it), we recognize the same person. The book of Daniel still adds a vivid descriptive dimension to the picture.¹⁵ More verses in Daniel refer prophetically to the Antichrist,¹⁶ just like there is one about judgment on him.¹⁷

Daniel also describes a *type of Antichrist*.¹⁸ That was Antiochus IV Epiphanes.¹⁹ He is called a 'master of intrigue'.²⁰ This man overran the Temple,²¹ took away the daily sacrifices and offered a pig on the altar. After this abomination the Maccabees revolted against him and drove him out. After their victory, Judas Maccabeus cleansed the Temple.²² In the Jewish calendar this was 2,300 days later.²³

The beauty of chapter 11 is that it gives a detailed description of the post-Greek, pre-Roman kingdoms of the Ptolemies (kings of the South) and the Seleucids (kings of the North) which was prophesied more than 200 years before it took place. This may be the best proof of how God not only knows the end from the beginning,²⁴ but also about how He lets His prophets know these things in exact detail before they come to pass.²⁵

In the history that followed, a similar scenario was seen at the time that the Roman armies destroyed Jerusalem,²⁶ and once again a comparable but more horrible fulfillment of these prophecies will be seen at the end of time.

Finally, believers in a pre-tribulation rapture should consider the texts where the saints are overcome by Antichrist.²⁷ Some argue that these saints are the Jews who were not converted

⁹ Dan. 6

¹⁰ Rev. 20:7-10

¹¹ Dan. 7:13,14 & 8:15,16 respectively

¹² 8:1-14

¹³ 7:8,11

¹⁴ Rev. 13:5,6; 19:20

¹⁵ Dan. 7:20,21,24-26

¹⁶ 9:26b,27; 11:36-45; 12:11

¹⁷ 8:25b; compare 2 Thess. 2:8 with Dan. 9:27b; 9:24b-26a speaks about Christ's first coming

¹⁸ 8:9-14 & 23-26

¹⁹ A Seleucid king ('the king of the north') who ruled from 175-163 BC

²⁰ Dan. 8:23; 11:21-32a

²¹ On 15 August 171 BC

²² On 25 December 165 BC

²³ Dan. 8:14; Bailey, 1993:79

²⁴ Is. 46:10

²⁵ Am. 3:7

²⁶ Under Titus, in 70 AD

²⁷ Dan. 7:21,25; 8:12,24b; 12:7b; Rev. 13:7

at the time of the rapture but got to know the Lord (how?) after that event. The Scriptures seem to offer no support for that thought.