

**THE FUTURE (10)**

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*The Future of the Nations surrounding Palestine.*

In a previous chapter we noticed that the book Daniel describes four world empires which would govern successively. In the first five chapters we find the history and character of the Babylonian Empire. In the next one that of the Median-Persian Empire. Besides these, the fourth empire is described in detail in chapters 2 and 7, whereas in chapters 8 and 11 important remarks are made about the third, the Greek-Macedonian Empire.

In this connection it is important to notice that, although the first three empires are successively robbed of their power, they nevertheless remain according to Daniel 2 and 7. In Daniel 2 the entire image is destroyed at once and in verses 35 and 40 it is expressly stated that the ingredients out of which these empires are formed will be broken in pieces together. The significance of this is first of all presented in chapter 7:12, where it states: "As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away; but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time." Although they no longer exist as world empires, their basic countries will still be present in the time of the end.

*An Important Principle for the Understanding of Prophecy.*

Isaiah 46:10 records that God announces the end from the beginning. This is a very important principle which is confirmed throughout Scripture. Right from Genesis 1:1 all God's announcements have the ultimate purpose of God's ways in view. That is why nearly all events presented to us have a typical significance connected with the execution of God's counsels at a future date. This holds more specifically true for the prophecies. Simple prophecies, which appear to have been fulfilled long ago, in general signify (typically) things that are to take place in the time of the end.

In a similar manner we see in the events of the first chapters of Daniel types of God's salvation for the faithful remnant of Judah, when they will live in a time characterized by an all-powerful state and by idolatry.

*The Greek-Macedonian Empire.*

As mentioned, in chapters 8 and 11 the prophetic history of the Greek-Macedonian Empire is recorded. At the time these prophecies were given none of them were fulfilled. Some three centuries later Alexander the Great conquered the Near East and established his empire. Today large parts of these chapters have been fulfilled. For instance the first 17 verses of chapter 8 (perhaps with the exclusion of verse 11 and 12) as well as chapter 11:1-35 have taken place. But, although these events are largely fulfilled, they are nevertheless, for the greater part at least, examples of things that will occur in the end time.

Besides this we find that in chapter 8 from verse 17 and in chapter 11 from verse 36 the description concerns the end time specifically. It is stated in chapter 8:17 that the vision will be until the time of the end, and in chapter 11:35 we see the transition from fulfilled prophecy to the unfulfilled prophecy of the time of the end.

In these chapters we read about the event, now confirmed by history, of Alexander the Great establishing his empire, and also that after his untimely death it would be divided into four parts. Two of these parts play an important role in the history of Israel and the prophecies speak in quite some detail about these two. They are ruled by the King of the North and the King of the South. Of the latter we read in verse 8 of chapter 11 that he rules over Egypt. From this we can conclude that the King of the North must reign to the North of Palestine and secular history confirms that it was Syria.

*Egypt and Syria.*

These two powers will still be present at the time of the end. And, just as before, they will be antagonistic towards each other as well as towards Israel.

Especially one King of the North out of the past is described in detail in chapters 8 and 11. In chapter 8:9 he is presented as the little horn and in chapter 11:21 as a vile person coming in peaceably, who will obtain the kingdom through flatteries. Secular history calls him Antiochus IV Epiphanus.

According to these prophecies he would rage against the Jews in a terrible manner. The books of the Maccabees give us an impression how terrible it really was. In all these things he is a type of the King of the North who in the end-time, will treat the Jewish people even worse. We can find other examples of him in the Old Testament, Sennacherib, for instance, in Isaiah 10. Other prophecies speak also about this terrible king of the end time.

#### *The Invasion of Palestine.*

In Isaiah 7 we find the invasion by Rezin, the king of Syria. This prompts Isaiah to prophesy about the future. He speaks of the virgin that will conceive and bring forth a son, called Emmanuel, and of the invasions by Egypt and Syria. Although both events were provisionally fulfilled when Sennacherib invaded the land, in reality they look to the future. No one will deny that the prophecy in verse 14, speaking of the virgin that conceived, refers to the birth of the Lord Jesus which took place several centuries later; the Word of God itself tells us this in Matthew 1:22 and 23. In the same way the invasion actually referred to will occur in the end time.

In Daniel 11:40 we find the description of these events. In verses 33 to 35 we find the transition from the time of Antiochus to the time of the end. Verse 33 speaks of many days, verse 35 says that it will be unto the time of the end. Then in verse 36 reference is made to a king, and the following verses show that this will be the king of the Jews, who rules over Palestine.

Then, in verse 40, we find the invasion mentioned before. Egypt and Syria will attack Palestine simultaneously, not as allies however, but as bitter enemies.

#### *A Covenant with Death and an Agreement with Sheol.*

The Jews have been afraid for this invasion for a long time. In Isaiah 28 it says that with this very event in view they have entered into a covenant with the godless leaders of the Roman Empire. In these verses God says: "For ye have said, we have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol have we made an agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us; for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves. Therefore thus says the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I lay for foundation in Zion a stone, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation: he that trusteth shall not make haste. And I will appoint judgment for a line, and righteousness for a plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place. And your covenant with death shall be annulled, and your agreement with Sheol shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, ye shall be trodden down by it. As it passeth through it shall take you; for morning by morning shall it pass through, by day and by night; and it shall be terror only to understand the report."

They hope to be saved by this covenant. But God Himself shall take this security away from them and will send the King of the North to discipline the godless nation. Not that the King of the North himself is aware of this. He does it out of hatred toward the Jews and out of the wickedness of his heart. From the types used for him and the description given of him in the Word of God, it appears that it is a terrible, mean and shrewd ruler.

#### *The Ally of the King of the North.*

From where does this king gather the courage to oppose the tremendous power of the Roman Empire, the ally of the Jews? He ought to understand that he is incapable to withstand that power. In the type of Antiochus we find that he does not dare to transgress the command of the Roman Senate and that on instruction from it he gives up Egypt (Dan. 11:30).

Chapter 8:24 gives the key to this. It says here: "And his power shall be mighty, *but not by his own power.*" That means he will have another power behind him sufficiently strong to challenge the Roman Empire.

Since at that time only one other power will exist that is about equal in strength to Rome, it must be Russia that is backing him up. And this is even clearer when we see that the Russian Empire is situated immediately behind the country of the King of the North. Furthermore, troops from the countries over which the King of the North reigns, will be in the armies of Russia (Ezek. 38 & 39).

### *The Course of the Campaign.*

The Egyptians will lose the battle, the King of the North will first conquer the Jews and will then proceed toward Egypt and occupy it. Yes, even Libya and Ethiopia will not be able to withstand him (Dan. 11:40-43).

However, when he arrives at the pinnacle of his power, rumors from the East and from the North will make him afraid. Just as the ships of Chittim came against him in the type (v. 30) — which was fulfilled in Antiochus time when the Romans came against him — so it will be in the end time. The Jews will have called for their ally, the Roman Emperor, who will have concentrated his armies and sent them to Palestine. Filled with anger the King of the North will retreat to meet this enemy, but at this moment God Himself will interfere. As we saw in the previous article, the Lord Jesus will descend from heaven and will destroy the armies of the Roman Empire with their commanders.

Several prophets give further details of these invasions. In Isaiah 10 God says that He will send the Assyrian against the Jews to rob and to loot, because of His wrath against the nation. But, since the king of Assyria does it "in the pride of his heart," and because it will be his joy to "destroy and to eliminate," therefore the Lord will judge him as soon as his disciplinary action against Israel is completed.

### *The Siege and the Conquest of Jerusalem.*

In Zechariah 12 we find the siege of Jerusalem by all nations around her, just as in Daniel 11 the kings of the South and the North went out to battle against her.

Zechariah 14:2 gives further detail. "And I will assemble all the nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity; and the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city."

That cannot yet be fulfilled. When Nebuchadnezzar and Titus took the city, all who did not perish were taken away as captives.

The next verse makes it abundantly clear when this will take place. "Jehovah will go forth and fight with those nations... and His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives..."

This siege of Jerusalem will therefore take place very shortly before the Lord will return to the earth.

As we saw Isaiah 28 and 29 speak also of this time. The Jews have entered into a covenant with the Roman Empire to be safe from the "overflowing scourge," the King of the North. But God will annul this covenant and the enemy will come anyway.

In chapter 29 we find that Jerusalem is surrounded and that thereby the pride of its inhabitants is broken. But the Lord will deliver them.

### *The Timing of these Events.*

Reading these parts of Scripture in connection with Daniel 11, we find the following sequence of events...

1) The Kings of the North and of the South will attack Jerusalem simultaneously. The latter one, however, will occupy the city and create a terrible blood bath in it. Afterwards he will continue into Egypt.

2) Alarmed by rumours from the North and the East the King of the North will return to Palestine and once more encamp against Jerusalem.

This time however without success because the Lord Jesus Himself will descend from heaven to save the faithful remnant of the Jews.

3) The King of the North is destroyed, but not by a human army. He will come to an end and have no helper (Dan. 11:45). He shall stand against the Prince of Princes but he will be broken without hand (Dan. 8:25).

In Micah 5 we find that their salvation is brought about through the immediate interventions of the Lord Jesus. After His birth is announced in the first three verses, verse 5 proclaims, "And this Man shall be peace. When the Assyrian shall come into our land..."

Isaiah 14 shows us that Assyria will be judged after the Roman Empire. When Jacob has returned into his land the fourth empire, represented by the image of the king of Babylon, the first empire, will be destroyed first, and Assyria later.

And in Isaiah 30 the judgment of Assyria is mentioned in one breath with the judgment over the Antichrist, the king of the Jews (vs. 31-33).

From the many places speaking about the King of the North (Assyria) we learn how important this great enemy of Israel will be in the time of the end. He will be the most important enemy.

### *The Future of the Arabs.*

We have seen the future of the lands to the north and the south of Palestine. Only the Philistines live to the west, but to the east are the Edomites, the Moabites, and the Ammonites, all old enemies of Israel. From Zechariah 12:2 we can conclude that they will take part in the siege of Jerusalem. It says there *all* surrounding nations. Is it to help the King of the North in his attack on the Jews? In any event he will spare them after his victory (Dan. 11:41).

But God does not forget their centuries-long enmity against His people; after Israel has been delivered it will punish them. "They shall fly upon the shoulder of the Philistines toward the West; together they shall spoil the sons of the East; they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab, and the children of Ammon shall obey them" (Is. 11:14). "Moab is my wash-pot; upon Edom will I cast my sandal" (Ps. 108:9). See also Jeremiah 47, 48, 49 and Ezekiel 25 and other places.

### *Will Egypt and Assyria be done away forever?*

We saw a little of the enmity of Assyria and Egypt. Many places in Scripture tell us the terrible deeds they have committed and those they will still commit against Israel. A heavy judgment will fall on them.

But God's grace is amazing. Even for these terrible enemies there is blessing in store. When they have learned righteousness through the judgment of God (Is. 26:9), their hatred for Israel will be gone, and under the blessed rule of the Lord Jesus they will serve Him together with Israel.

"And Jehovah will smite Egypt; He will smite and heal; and they shall return to Jehovah, and He will be entreated of them, and will heal them."

"In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria; and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria; and Egypt shall serve with Assyria. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth; whom Jehovah of hosts will bless, saying, 'Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.' "(Is. 19: 22-25).

*To be cont'd*

## **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

Q-2. How does one know that he has received the Holy Spirit?

A-2. First of all it is a question of simply believing what God has said in His Word. "Having believed ye have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. 1:13). God says so, so it is, if you believe!

Secondly, when we know the Lord Jesus as our Saviour we become conscious of a close tie that exists between ourselves and our brothers and sisters in Christ; a tie that is closer than the one we have to our natural relatives. This is because the Holy Spirit has baptized us into one body (1 Cor. 12:13); because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5) we love our brethren.

Believe and enjoy what the Lord Jesus has done for you and who He is. When you do that, you are directing your attention to Him of Whom the Spirit came to testify; expressly for this purpose God promised to give His Spirit (Jn. 16:14). Do not be concerned whether or not you have the Spirit, if you are concerned you doubt God to be true to His promise; you grieve the Holy Spirit because He cannot do His work in you; you make yourself miserable because you become occupied with your own worthiness rather than Christ's. His work made you fit to be the temple of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:22), He is your righteousness (2 Cor. 5:21), and God keeps His promises.