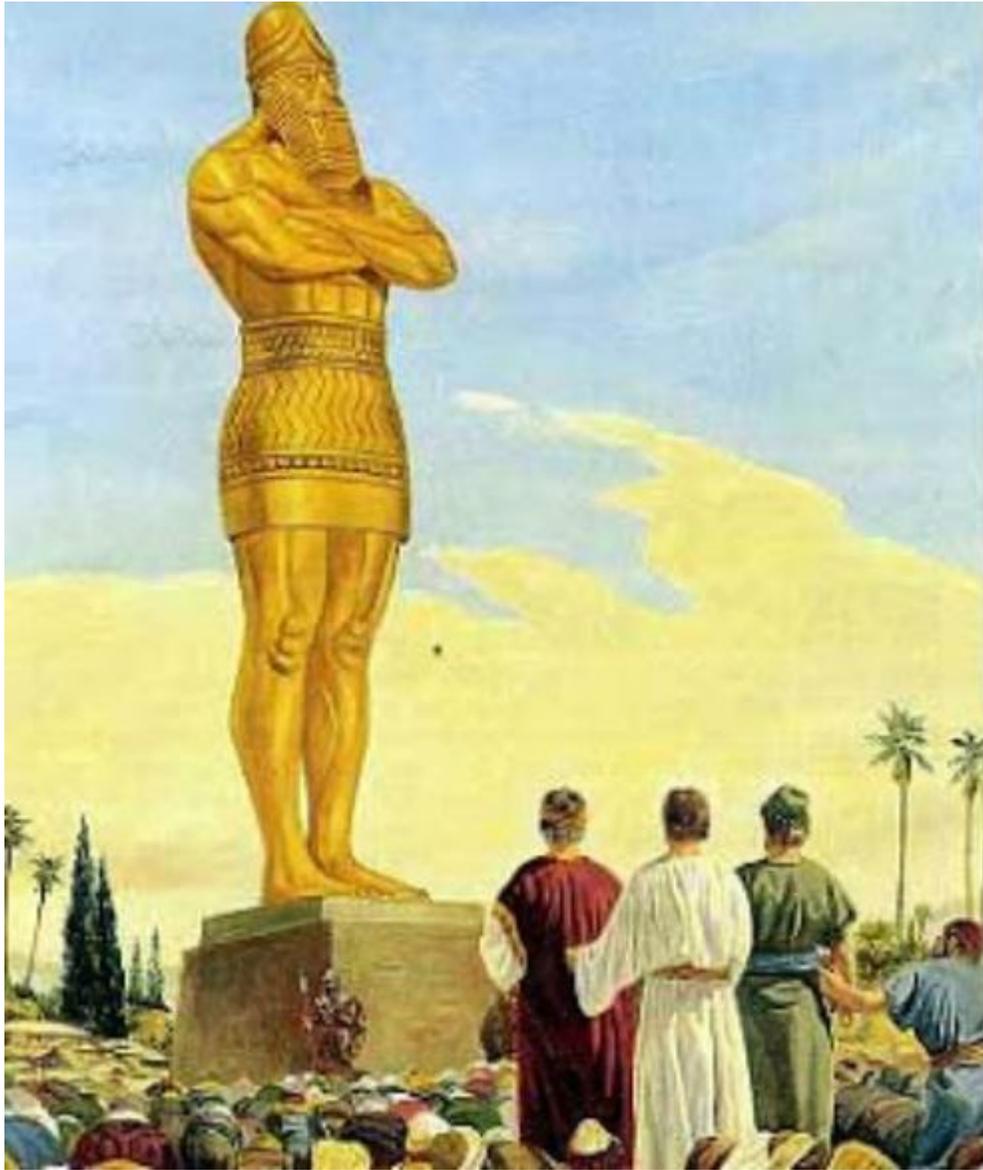


A KING SHALL MAKE A GOLDEN IDOL

03/22/2016



BY Pastor Mike Taylor

“Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.” Daniel 3:1

One of the most familiar stories found in your Bible of an event that happened during the Babylonian captivity of the children of Israel, when Nebuchadnezzar decided to make a statue of gold and erect it to stand for all people to worship. The story focuses on three Hebrew children of the captivity who had been elevated in the government of the king of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego so named in the Babylonian culture, but known as Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah in the Hebrew tongue. I find this amazing, as just in previous chapters, the King of Babylon had proclaimed the God of Daniel, the God of the Bible as the only God of gods and all must worship Daniel's God....I don't get this King...did he just fall back into his old ways, or is the story pointing to something deeper and prophetic?

Knowing that Daniel's book was written during the Babylonian captivity and is full of prophecy and future events given to Daniel in dreams and visions, was the story of what happened to these three men just a story of obedience and faith? These three men who would not deny the God of their fathers, even if they had to go against the most powerful man during this time in history stood firm in their conviction of worshipping no one but the True God of Heaven.

The king commanded that when the sound of musical instruments were sounded that all the people that he had gathered, which was all the high officials in his government, would fall down in a sign of worship and loyalty to the king. Those who did not were warned that those who did not comply would be immediately executed.

“And whoso falleth not down and worshipping shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.” Daniel 3:6-7

As the story progresses, and the Hebrew children mentioned would not bow down and worship this pagan idol, the knowledge of their failure to yield to the king's command reached Nebuchadnezzar's ears from those of the Chaldeans that were jealous of anyone of the captivity being elevated to high office and they watched them and reported it to the king. But the three Hebrew men stood firm on this obedience to God. Of course, being a king who had power over all the land and his subjects, this made Nebuchadnezzar furious, and he confronted the Hebrew men and gave them a chance to submit to his decree, but the Hebrews' in his government answered thus:

“Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.

v. 17 If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.

v. 18 But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.” Daniel 3:16-18

In this passage the King of Babylon is a symbol of the coming Anti-Christ, and those that proclaim by music and crying aloud that they fall down and worship are a symbol of the false prophet, but it is a prophecy of the coming future of the last Anti-Christ of our modern era. The idol is made of gold, or a false representation of divinity.

Not needing to go through the whole chapter for space, as anyone who wishes to read the chapter in Daniel will read where these men were thrown bound down into a furnace heated seven times hotter than normal to make an example of those who failed to obey the king in all matters. But what happened? Knowing the story, I may not have to tell you, but scripture says that God protected them from the flames by being with them in the flaming fire.

King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished when he looked into the open door of the furnace, and saw four men walking around in the flames.

“Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.

He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God. “ Daniel 24-25

ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION

When finished reading this passage in your bible, where else can we find a similar event that happened in history and mentioned in other places of your Bible? Yes, several places, such as pagan idol is set up in the Holy Temple in Jerusalem during the last dictator on earth, known as the final Anti-Christ and one must wonder, is there a

connection? I believe there is. Each will be a sign of loyalty, as well as worship of the image set up in Daniel's day, and also in the last days during the Tribulation. I believe Daniel prophesies just as John did. Note the similarities of each passage:

“And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.” Revelation 13:14-15

It is going to happen in the end of days, much like what happened in Daniel's account of Nebuchadnezzar's golden idol. Also, let's look at another time when an Anti-Christ type individual made a golden image and set it up in the Holy of Holies in honor of the pagan god, Zeus with the face of one we now know as Antiochus Epiphanes, the Syrian ruler who caused the Maccabean revolt that defeated this standing army and drove them from Israel. To the nation of Israel, this was an abomination. Our Lord Jesus spoke also spoke of a coming “abomination that causeth desolation” and prophesied concerning again, the children of Israel.

“When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

v. 16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

v. 17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:

v. 18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

v. 19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

v. 20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day.

V. 21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” Matthew 24:15-2

So what am I driving at? Notice in each passage of Daniel and Matthew, even in historical accounts concerning Antiochus Epiphanes, that each example deals with the Jewish people exclusively. Notice in the account found in Daniel that all of the Gentiles of the Babylonian culture fell down and worshiped the pagan image that Nebuchadnezzar set up...then see from history that Antiochus Epiphanes targeted only the Jewish people to worship a false golden idol that he had set up in his attempt to eradicate anything Jewish and Hellenize the area with pagan customs. That is an historical fact.

When Jesus spoke in Matthew, who was He talking about? He was talking about the Jews. He was talking about the Nation of Israel reborn in the end times and another coming pagan idol that would target them for idolatry and worshiping the beast of Revelation. So why is that important today? Most of the nation of Israel today are secular, or non believers in the God of the Bible, let alone Jesus the Messiah. It's important because God will turn His attention to the nation of Israel exclusively for the bringing of repentance and realizing their Messiah whom they had rejected. The Tribulation is all about Israel's salvation.

THE 144, 000 JEWISH EVANGELIST COME UPON THE SCENE

“And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.” Revelation 7:4

This is the start of the events that lead to Israel turning back to God. When God ordains these men and sets up His two witnesses that prophecy for 3.5 years on the Temple Mount, then God will begin dealing with Israel as a

nation, and the focus will have shifted from the Church and the Age of Grace, back to Daniel's 70th week that deals only with Israel and their purification by fire.

“And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

v.4 These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.” Revelation 11:3-4
It is believed that these two witnesses will supernaturally protect Israel the first 3.5 years, but after they are slain, resurrected, and translated into heaven, then the abomination that causes desolation will be set up in the Temple in Jerusalem, and the persecution of the Jewish people will spring forth as a flood, as prophesied.

I must emphasize my belief that the Tribulation is designed for two things as being exclusively refining Israel as silver is refined in the furnace, and to extinguish all rebellion. Malachi prophesied of this coming refinement in fire.

“But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:

v. 3 And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.

v. 4 Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years. “ Malachi 3:2-4

DANIEL PROPHECIES ISRAEL'S COMING PERSECUTION

Returning to Daniel and the three Hebrew men, note that they were cast into the fire, but not hair was singed, not a wrinkle in their clothes, and not a smell of smoke on their person. As God saved these men from the fire, so will God save those who come to faith and belief in the Messiah at long last during the Tribulation. In 70 AD, when the Romans were set to sack the city and burn it to the ground, a minority group of those who believed God escaped into Petra and they were saved. Those who stood to face the Romans were destroyed by the hundreds of thousands. As it was then, so it will be when God protects a remnant of the Jewish people from Satan, the Red Dragon who is wroth with the seed of the woman and go to make war with them.

So when Jesus spoke of the “abomination that causes desolation” He spoke of those who believed the Word of God would flee into the mountains, maybe even to Petra to be protected by God. See Revelation 12:14-17. Satan will be thwarted in his attempt to destroy those who have embraced their Messiah and in his rage will wage war and overcome those of her seed who will not repent.

As it was in 70 AD, history will repeat itself and a remnant of the nation of Israel will be saved, those who believe the witness of the 144, 000 Jewish Evangelist. It will be a greater holocaust than during World War 2, as the Anti-Christ will make Hitler seem like elementary school.

SO WHAT'S THE POINT?

Glad you asked. The point of this whole study, is that the end times are for the bringing Israel to the knowledge of their Messiah, and everyone else, by majority will be in rebellion and destroyed by God. Now not all the saved in the Tribulation will be only Jewish, as I don't want to make the mistake to say that salvation during the Tribulation is only given to the Jewish people. Some will believe (a minority number), just as Israel believes, but it will cost many of these people their lives. In each example that I've mentioned here, do you notice someone, or a group of people that are not mentioned?

THE PROPHECIES ARE ALL ABOUT ISRAEL

In the first example, the Hebrew children that refused to bow down and worship the image, and went through the fire of judgment of men. All Gentiles surrounding them were obedient to the wishes of the powers that be, namely Nebuchadnezzar and his command.

In the second example, who was the focus of the rage of Antiochus Epiphanes? Again, the Jewish people were the target of obedience to a pagan god. A Gentile king persecutes the God's "elect" as Israel is the only groups of people who are called "God's elect"...we are called His church, His children, and His saints, but when the Gospels speak of gathering the "elect" from the four winds, as in the Gospel of Mark, this is a sign about gathering the saved and persecuted Jewish people, in their martyrdom. It is another sign that the church is not present for the Tribulation.

"And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven." Mark 13:27

How do I know the elect are the nation of Israel? Because the very next verse speaks of the fig tree budding and in context, both verses speak of Israel...NOT the church...as the church is already gone.

"Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near:

v. 29 So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors.

v. 30 Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done." Mark 13:28-30

This is again spoken of Matthew chapter 24 by our Lord again.

"Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect [chosen people] from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. (Matthew 24:30-31)

Israel is God's chosen people. If those who see Christ are mourning, it can't be the Ekklesia, as we would be rejoicing...so Jesus is not speaking of the "called out ones" the Ekklesia, but the nations of Gentiles in rebellion who will know that judgment has come and they have taken up battle plans to wage war against a Living God, but realize it to their horror that they are going to be destroyed.

In the third example in Matthew 24 that we have hit upon, Jesus was speaking to the Jewish people, and them exclusively. He did not mention anyone else, not Gentiles, not Tribulation saints, and especially not the Church of the Age of Grace, as the church had not been born yet.

Each of these examples were prophetic in the coming Tribulation, known as Jacob's Troubles. They deal with Israel and they make no mention of any other group. They are prophetic that the coming Tribulation will be near totally about Israel being cast into the fire of Tribulation and being refined as silver and gold is refined in the fire. Israel has been a wayward child for nearly 4000 years. God has not abandoned her, but has put her aside until the fullness of the Gentiles come in.

ANTI-SEMITISM GROWS

With this knowledge, can you see that any God fearing member of the Church of the Living God, why would they be against God by coming against Israel, the apple of God's eye?

"For thus saith the LORD of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye." Zechariah 2:8

I am sometimes aghast when I hear of any church group, so called "Christians" that take a stand against Israel and side with the Palestinians with the so called BDS movement "boycott, divestment, and sanctions" against God's chosen people, His elect. They are playing with fire and judgment from a Holy God. Some deny that the Nation of Israel are actually part of the 12 tribes of Israel and that God has abandoned Israel. How foolish can one group be?

"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

v. 32 *Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD:*

v. 33 *But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

v. 34 *And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” Jeremiah 31:31-34*

Our God further proclaims that Israel will always be His people...they will always be before Him:

“Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name:

v. 35 *If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.” Jeremiah 31:35-36*

If you look at any day with the sun shining, the moon giving her light at night, and the stars still twinkling in the heavens, then God says, when these pass away, then and only then will Israel be anything but His chosen people. Check it out folks, ...even in this time of their unbelief God will redeem Israel, not loosing one..It will not always be so that they will be in unbelief. Those who are an enemy of Israel, make themselves an enemy of God. God says that He will bring in Israel when they cry out aloud, through much Tribulation, just what Jesus spoke of:

37 “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing.

38 Look, your house is left to you desolate.

39 For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’” Matthew 23:37-39

When Israel is refined in the fire of Tribulation, they will finally recognize their Messiah that they had killed 2000 years ago and they will mourn:

“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.” Zechariah 12:19

When Christ comes to set up His Kingdom on earth, He will come to fight for the children of Israel:

"Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.

v. 2 *For I will gather all 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 residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.*

v. 3 *Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. Zachariah 14:1-3*

Paul emphasized this in Romans when speaking of his brethren, the nation of Israel....

“For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: “The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.” Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.” (Romans 11:25-29)

Our great God will show them mercy because of the promises He made, not because they deserve it. Ezekiel 36 shows this clearly. God repeats several times that He is bringing Israel back for *His Holy* name's sake, and not for Israel's sake.

Am I making a case for the support of national Israel? You bet I am!! No, Israel does not deserve this kind of mercy, but my reader, neither do you or I. We are saved by grace and God has been dealing with this Ekklesia (or called out ones) the Church for 2000 years,. The Age of Grace and the Church of the Living God is composed of all who believe, which is vastly a Gentile church saved by the mercy and the love of God. It's not a denomination, or church building, or some evangelist on your TV screen. No, it's a blood washed, baptized, turned around 180 degrees, repentant, and forgiven sinner that is the church. It is every individual that has the Holy Spirit as a deposit of a future glorification and salvation of their soul. No denomination has a lock on the gates of Heaven. It is free for the asking. God deals with each of us on His time schedule. Each of us were born to decide what to do with this God/Man, Jesus Christ. Israel will get their turn when God turns His undivided attention to the national salvation of Israel.

So, if your denomination, your church, or your pastor/priest makes a case in error for abandoning Israel as a people, and who spouts the nonsense that we are modern day Israel or somehow replaced Israel, you need to either straighten them out, or leave and find a church that actually believes the Word of God.

THE TRIBULATION HOUR LOOMS STRAIGHT AHEAD

When God turns that focus upon Israel for their salvation, then we are in the Tribulation for 7 years. And if you see what I'm talking about above come to pass, then you just missed the greatest event in all of history, next to the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ...you just missed the “translation”, the snatching away, the mystery of the removal of the Church in the twinkling of an eye.

*“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,
v. 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

v. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

v. 54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” 1st Corinthians 15:51-54

Don't let this hour catch you by surprise. If you are playing church, have no relationship with Jesus Christ, now is the time to make that decision you've been putting off...When Jesus comes to take His saints home, the Age of grace will have ended and the Tribulation will come like a whirlwind and many will be swept away in death and destruction. Don't make that mistake and think you can do that “tomorrow”you're not promised tomorrow...God has been patient with Israel and will bring her into the Kingdom of God. If you be a gentile, then you have no such promise...Only a fearful prospect of a wrathful God.

22 But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly,

23 to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,

24 to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

25 See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven?

26 At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens."

27 The words "once more" indicate the removing of what can be shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain.

28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe,

29 for our "God is a consuming fire." Hebrews 12:22-29 (my emphasis)

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. " 2nd Peter 3:8

" For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16

Don't be like Israel has been in their blindness. They won't always be blind, but if you miss the event of the coming of Jesus Christ, then heaven help you...you're gonna need it.

This is pastor Mike Taylor, praying for your salvation. If you need counseling, prayer, or just a listening ear, then drop me a line at realteam1999@sbcglobal.net, or visit me online for more studies in Biblical lessons from God's Word at www.churchofgod-usa.org. God bless you all,

TILL WE MEET AT JESUS FEET