

## **GOING WITH GOD**

### **Sermon 11**

## **END TIME STORIES**

### **Daniel 11:36-12:13**

One of the recurring themes of the book of Daniel is the fact that human history is in fact HIS STORY, the story of God at work in relationship with mankind. We have seen in this book how his prophecies have been fulfilled in the history of mankind in amazing details, how kingdoms and rulers have come and gone as God in his perfect plan raised them and brought them down for His purposes. Up until now the prophecies we have dealt with have referred to past events that have already been fulfilled. Now however as we move into chapter 11, we encounter prophecies that God had given to Daniel dealing with the end times, events that still have to take place. The book of Daniel is a key portion of Scripture along with the book of Revelation for understanding the times of the

end. We need this book to understand Revelation. At least 21 passages from Daniel are quoted or referred to in 16 New Testament books, most of them in the book of Revelation. All of Daniel 6 is referred to in Hebrews 11:33.

In the last days of Daniel's life, God gives to him a vision of the last days of mankind on earth. Join with me this morning as we consider the end time stories God gave to Daniel. I am aware that there is a lot of disagreement and debate around these events and in particular the order of these events. I do not have time to discuss these and have therefore taken the most common understanding of these events.

### **1. THE TIME OF TRIBULATION vs's 11:36 – 12:1**

In the first part of this vision God reveals to Daniel a time of great suffering referred to as the tribulation. There are a number of distinct events that go up to make the tribulation. The period of tribulation will end with the return of Christ and the

confinement of the Antichrist and Satan in the lake of fire in Rev 19:11-21.

### **1.1 The rise of the Antichrist vs's 36-39**

In verse 36-39 we have described the rise of the one called the anti-christ. He does not come suddenly but gradually grows in power. He is the little horn referred to in 7:24ff. He begins as a man of peace but will eventually assume world control and set himself up as God. He will be an exceedingly influential man, a great orator but exceedingly evil. He will be powerful and successful until the end of the tribulation and the return of Christ. He will be an atheistic and reject all religions except the one he establishes when he proclaims himself as God. He will attack the nation of Israel and seek the complete destruction of God's chosen people. When people of the world worship this man they are in fact worshipping Satan.

### **1.2 Military invasion vs's 40-43**

When the Antichrist will move into the land of Israel and set up his imager in the Jewish temple proclaiming himself as God, there will be some who resist him. The kings of the North and the South will oppose him and bring their armies to Israel to defeat him. The Antichrist will however overcome his enemies and acquire great wealth as a result.

### **1.3 Armageddon vs's 44-45**

Throughout the last three and a half years of the tribulation, nations will submit to the Antichrist but there will be growing dissent against his rule. Verse 44 refers to a growing army from the east that will attack him. This army would meet the forces of the Antichrist on the Plain of Esdraelon and the battle of Armageddon will commence and signals the end of the tribulation.

## **1.4 The return of Christ**

As these two huge armies face each other the sign of the returning Son of Man will appear in the heavens. In Matt 24:29-30 we read,

“Immediately after the distress of those days the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken” At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory”.

The opposing armies will unite and fight against Christ but the Lord will descend from heaven, defeat both armies and take the antichrist and Satan captive and cast them into the lake of fire. Verse 45 tells us of the antichrist, “he will come to his end, and no one will help him”. After his return Jesus will stand on the Mt of Olives “and the Lord shall be king over all the earth”,

Zech 14:9 and will establish His glorious kingdom for a thousand years, Rev 20:1-7.

## **2. THE KINGDOM vs's 12:2-3**

In Rev 20:1-3 we read,

“And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, the ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations any more until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be set free for a short time”.

In Rev 20:1-7 reference is made to the “thousand years” or the millennium six times. It refers to a time in which Christ will reign on earth with his people in a literal kingdom. In verse 2 and 3 we are given two key characteristics of this kingdom.

## **2.1 Resurrection vs 2**

The first characteristic of this kingdom age is the reality of the resurrection. In 1 Thess 4:13-18 we are told that when Christ returns in the air to call his church, the dead in Christ will be raised first, and then the living believers will be caught up with them to be with the Lord. When Jesus returns at the end of the tribulation, He will bring his people with him to share in the victory and the glory. At that time the Old Testament saints and the tribulation martyrs will be raised and enter the kingdom. However the unbelievers will not be raised until after the kingdom age and they will be judged, Rev 20:4-6.

## **2.2 Reward vs 3**

Having experienced resurrection we will now receive our rewards in accordance with way in which we have lived and served. The believers will stand in the judgement seat not to determine our eternal security, that is secure, but to receive the

rewards for the way in which we had faithfully served the Lord on earth. Every cup will be full in heaven but some will be larger than others. Believers who have suffered in service of Christ on earth will receive greater rewards.

## **3. FINAL INSTRUCTIONS vs's 12:4-13**

As Daniel's life and God's prophecies in this amazing book come to an end, God gives to his faithful servant Daniel his final instructions as to what he was to do with this valuable insight he had entrusted to Daniel. To seal the book did not mean to hide it away for this would serve no purpose. The book was sealed in the sense that the full meaning of what Daniel wrote would not be understood until the time of the end. When John wrote the book of Revelation he was told to keep it unsealed because it was written in the time of the end. You and I who are living in the end times are able to understand the book

of Daniel as the readers in Daniel's time could not. What a blessing!

## **CONCLUSION**

God through his servant Daniel gives to his people insight into the end times. Daniel's generation were not permitted to understand it but we who live in the end times are blessed to understand it. It will involve a time of tribulation, trial and suffering. This will however be followed by Christ's return and the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth and the victory over Satan. Thank God the future is in his hands. We therefore have nothing to fear for God is working out His plans and purposes.