

FROM THE HEAD OF GOLD TO THE SON OF PERDITION THE FUTURE OF CIVILIZATION

There is to be a ruler of men, according to the Bible, called "The Son of Perdition." II Thessalonians 2:3. There lived on this earth more than 2500 years ago a ruler of men, called in the Bible "The Head of Gold." Daniel 2:38. The man called "The Son of Perdition" has not yet come into power. But he surely will, for in the Bible we have a more sure Word of Prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed. II Peter 1:19. This man of might and power is also called "The Man of Sin."

Note the strange language concerning this wicked but remarkable man:

"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth: and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake us a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders . . . and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." Revelation 13:11 to 18.

I am sure that you agree with me that this creature will be no ordinary man. He will force the majority of earth's inhabitants to idolatry. Perhaps in II Thessalonians 2:3 to 13 we learn why he is to be an extraordinary man:

"That Man of Sin be revealed, 'The Son of Perdition', Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God . . . The mystery of lawlessness doth already work: only he who now hindereth will hinder until he be taken out of the way, and then shall that Lawless One be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming; Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders."

In his "wonder" works and destruction this mighty one is to be associated with another beast. Concerning this one, we read in Revelation 13:4 . . . "And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?"

Now note carefully: "AND POWER WAS GIVEN HIM OVER ALL KINDRED AND TONGUES AND NATIONS." Revelation 13:7.

Now this very thought-provoking and interesting question: "If there is to be the actual fulfillment of these prophecies, have we Scriptural authority to declare that the hope of civilization is an ideal democracy ahead of us, the government of all nations and people by the people?" All intelligent, spiritual Christians, who understand and accept the plain statements in the Bible, certainly believe that there is to be a golden age on this earth, a warless period of peace and righteousness. But they know assuredly that it is to be a great Theocracy rather than a great democracy. It is to be a government of the people by a Divine-human King.

Before this Divine Kingdom of Peace is set up on this earth it seems quite certain, according to the sure Word of Prophecy, that there is trouble ahead for the human race, at least

for those who shall live on this earth during the reign of the two beasts whom we have mentioned.

CONCERNING THE HEAD OF GOLD

More than 2500 years ago God's servant said to the king of Babylon "thou art this Head of Gold." Daniel 2:38.

The title of our message is "From the Head of Gold to The Son of Perdition." We desire to show you by God's own infallible Word that a very definite period began with the reign of the first man and will end with the destruction of the second man. The Divine King, who will destroy the Son of Perdition, made this interesting statement when He visited His own race about nineteen centuries ago:

"And they (the Jews) shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES BE FULFILLED." Luke 21:24.

The city of Jerusalem was certainly trodden down by "The Head of Gold." He besieged and wrought awful destruction in Jerusalem about 600 BC. The closing chapters of II Kings and Jeremiah tell of this conquest. Read Jeremiah 52:4 to 34. We quote a few of the verses, beginning with the fourth:

"Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it, and built forts against it round about. So the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. And the king of Babylon bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison until the day of his death.

Jeremiah 52:27 . . . "Thus Judah was carried away captive out of his own land."

Jeremiah 52:13 . . . "And burned the house of the Lord, and the king's house: and all the houses of Jerusalem, and all of the houses of the great men, burned he with fire."

II Kings 24:14 . . . "And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all of the mighty men of valor, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land."

II Kings 25:3 . . . "And on the ninth day of the fourth month the famine prevailed in the city and there was no bread for the people of the land."

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES

Thus we learn that "The Times of the Gentiles" began with the siege of Jerusalem and the work of destruction in that city by Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. There was war and famine. God's chosen nation was removed from the place of political power. Since that time, in fulfillment of Deuteronomy 28:13 and 44, Israel has been the tail instead of the head, under the government of Gentile rulers. They are to be delivered from this subjugation when their Messiah comes to the earth, as the Son of man, in power and great glory. "Shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed." Daniel 2:44. "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations . . . Then shall the King say unto them." Matthew 25:31 to 46.

It should be apparent to all who give any thought to the subject, that both politically and spiritually we are living in "The Times of The Gentiles." The Lord in heaven revealed to Daniel

the beginning, the course and the culmination of the “Times of The Gentiles”, politically. The Lord in heaven revealed to and through the apostle Paul the beginning, the course and the culmination of “The Times of The Gentiles”, spiritually. This culmination is expressed in this language: “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” Ephesians 4:13.

As Israel was set aside and taken into captivity about 600 BC when Nebuchadnezzar, the Head of Gold, became the ruler of the entire world, so Israel was set aside spiritually when Paul was sent with the ministry of reconciliation to the Gentiles, some years after the Lord Jesus had gone back to heaven. Romans 11:15. Note what Paul said to Israel in Acts 13:46: “It was necessary that the Word of God should FIRST have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, LO WE TURN TO THE GENTILES.”

Note what Paul wrote some years later: “I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, if ye have heard of the Dispensation of the Grace of God which is given me to you-ward, How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery.” Ephesians 3:1 to 3. “The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.” Titus 2:11.

Paul had already written the words of Galatians 1:3 and 4: “Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age.”

THIS PRESENT EVIL AGE

This age in which we live is “this present evil age”, an age and civilization of sin. Satan is the god of this age, the prince of this world. But it is also “the age of grace”. “Where sin abounded, grace did much more over-abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 5:20 and 21.

How often have we wondered how our civilization has survived and continued. Be assured it is not because of man’s goodness, wisdom and achievements; but because the Almighty God, who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, has held things together in order that He might accomplish His Divine purpose in this present age before the civilization, which began with The Head of Gold, shall head up in The Man of Sin. The Lord Jesus shall destroy “The Son of Perdition” after His church has been taken to glory and right before He comes to earth to be the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. Surely then the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. Revelation 11:15.

Let us note in The Prophecy of Daniel how this kingdom is foretold, how “The Times of The Gentiles” began and will end: Daniel 2:1, 27 and 36 to 39.

“Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith His spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him.” “Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, the secret which the king hath commanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king: BUT there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days.” This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.

“Thou, O king art a king of kings, for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory, And Wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into thine hand, and made thee ruler over them all.

“THOU ART THIS HEAD OF GOLD”

So Nebuchadnezzar, the first great Gentile world ruler, was The Head of Gold. Then according to his dream and God’s interpretation of the same, by his servant Daniel, other Gentile world rulers were to follow-and did follow-Nebuchadnezzar during “The Times of The Gentiles”. From the Head of Gold to the feet of iron and clay (Daniel 2:32 and 33) this period is marked.

“Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors, that no place was found for them: and the Stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.” Daniel 2:35.

Then in verses 44 and 45 we learn that the Stone will be let down out of heaven and will be God’s King. There will be no ideal civilization until Almighty God establishes His Theocracy on this earth.

The coming of the Great King is told in Revelation 19:11 to 21.

“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse: and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war.” “And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: And He shall rule them with a rod of iron.”

“And it shall come to pass. that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts.” Zechariah 14:16.

THE PRINCE OF PEACE THE PRINCE OF THE WORLD

According to Isaiah 9:6 and 7, the Lord Jesus Christ will come to this earth to occupy the throne of David and take over the government of the earth. He will come as the Prince of Peace to inaugurate a reign of peace. So the Lord Jesus is coming to make war and to bring peace. In Luke 21:24 we read that “The Times of The Gentiles” will be fulfilled. In Luke 21:27 to 33 we learn how this period will end: “And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.” Note carefully the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, in John 5:27 . . . The Father “hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man.”

Israel’s national redemption and Satan’s incarceration will take place when the Prince of Peace comes to earth.

In Revelation 19:11 to 21 we learn that when the Son of man comes in judgment, to make war against the nations, He will consign The Son of Perdition to the lake of fire. Satan will be consigned into the awful pit. So we may be assured that there will be no permanent peace on this earth until this great contest between Satan’s man and God’s Son has taken place. Civilization, according to Matthew 24:1 to 24, is headed for the great tribulation. God will hold back this time of trouble until every member of the Body of Christ is safe and secure in heaven, to appear with Christ in glory. The Man of Sin, The Son of Perdition, will not sit in the temple of God to be worshipped as God until after this rapture has taken place. II Thessalonians 2:3 to 11.

In Luke 4:7 we learn that Satan earnestly desires to be worshipped. He even wanted the Lord Jesus to worship him. Some one has said that during the tribulation Satan will have his

trinity, the dragon, the beast and the false-prophet. The day of Christ will not come until The Man of Sin has been revealed. The day of Christ is not the rapture of the Church, which is Christ's Body, but refers to the kingdom to be established on this earth when every form of government will give way to Christ's Theocracy.

THE PENALTY FOR NOT WORSHIPPING THE HEAD OF GOLD

Daniel 3:15 to 18. "If ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace." Some faithful saints sent this word to the king of Babylon; "Be it known unto thee. O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

"Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold . . . Ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up." Daniel 3:1 and 5.

Thus we learn that it was the Jews who were sorely afflicted when The Head of Gold became the ruler of the whole world. In Revelation we learn that the Jews will again be sorely afflicted when the Beast and the Anti-Christ shall rule the world under the power of Satan. The coming Tribulation is peculiarly "The Time Of Jacob's Trouble"; but Jacob shall be saved out of it. Jeremiah 30:7 to 11. The nation Israel will be saved OUT of the great tribulation. The Church shall be saved FROM the great tribulation.

When "The Times of The Gentiles" began with The Head of Gold, there was bloodshed in war, famine and the compulsory worship of the image of Nebuchadnezzar. When "The Times of The Gentiles" shall come to an end with the two beasts of Revelation 13, there will be bloodshed in war, famine and the compulsory worship of the image of the beast. The penalty for not worshipping the first image was the fiery furnace. Those who shall worship the image of the beast will receive his mark and be able to buy and sell; otherwise, they shall be put to death. Thus "The Times of The Gentiles" began with a time of real sorrow and will end with a time of real sorrow.

OUR PRESENT CIVILIZATION

Dictatorship seems to be the order of the day. It may be that the blood-thirsty dictators of today are paving the way for the wicked Dictator who will not only be controlled by Satan, but will be indwelt by him in a special way. Many of God's spiritual children seem to believe that the Lord's coming for His Church cannot be far off. The fact of the matter is, that members of Christ's Body are to ever and always look for the blessed hope, the glorious appearing of Christ. Titus 2:13. But no child of God has Scriptural right to say dogmatically that the Lord is coming for His Church this week, this year, next year or within the next ten, twenty, thirty or one hundred years. This age of grace may close at any moment. On the other hand God, in His wisdom, may prolong this age until many of His children may receive the spirit of wisdom and revelation mentioned in Ephesians 1:16 to 22, and then obey Ephesians 3:9. The profound ignorance of this most blessed truth for saints is appalling, as well as inexcusable. Servants of the Lord are stewards of the mysteries of God. What a pity they have been so negligent and disobedient in this stewardship!

What a privilege is ours who live in this country with its "Bill of Rights", under the flag that grants us religious liberty! How glorious it is to live in this age of grace, with the blessed

privilege of being laborers together with God. What an opportunity and challenge for the Lord's ambassadors when the world is in disorder and trouble! We should take advantage of every opportunity to proclaim the wonderful gospel of the grace of God, telling poor, lost sinners how they may be saved by God's infinite grace and faith in the precious shed blood of the Son of God who loved us and gave Himself for us. At this time of trouble for our nation, Christians should read and obey I Timothy 2:1 to 7, praying for those who are in authority:

“For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour: Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus; Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”

Then note Titus 2:14, concerning Christ,

“Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

WILL THERE BE A REVIVAL?

Many Christians seem to think that there will be a world-wide revival before the Lord takes the Church to glory. They are praying for, and hoping for, such a time of blessing. Other Christians think that there will be no time for such a revival, because the Lord's coming is at hand. They tell us that Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini and the Emperor of Japan are bringing this age to an end, in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, and therefore, the Lord must come very soon. Of course, they should know that they cannot reconcile their doctrine concerning the “any-moment” coming of Christ with their political signs in fulfillment of prophecy. Likewise they should know by carefully studying Ephesians and Colossians, that under this present economy we are living in a timeless and a signless, parenthetical, unprophesied age.

We should emphasize these two facts: First, great revivals come from God and have generally occurred with the recovery of some blessed Divine truth that was lost to the Church in the early Christian centuries. On the authority of God's Word, we may rest assured that if there is to be another God-given revival, it will be with the recovery of the glorious Divine truth for which the apostle Paul suffered as an evildoer in the jail at Rome. II Timothy 2:8 and 9. Colossians 4:3 to 5, Ephesians 6:19 and 20. How shameful it is that most of the outstanding Fundamentalists are so ignorant of the most wonderful truth for God's saints in all the Bible, and make no effort to make known this message in obedience to Ephesians 3:9. But on the contrary, they join with the religious sectarians to malign, misrepresent, ostracize, condemn and persecute God's faithful servants who earnestly endeavor to proclaim this revealed secret of God. Second, while God works all things after the counsel of His own will, and neither man nor Satan can prevent the accomplishing of His eternal purpose in Christ Jesus, in accordance with Ephesians 4:7 to 14, and Ephesians 3:10 and 11, it would be far more Scriptural to say that the Lord is delaying His coming for the Church to give more of His children the opportunity to see and make others see the dispensation of the mystery which from the beginning of the hid in God (Ephesians 3:9), than to say that the Lord is delaying His coming until the European dictators get things in order for the revival of the Roman Empire.

It is true that the Lord Jesus Christ when here said that evil-doers would wax worse, and worse, and the apostle Paul was led by the Holy Spirit to declare this age to be “this present evil age”, yet we know that in many respects, spiritually speaking, there is more spiritual light in the world today than ever before, there are more consecrated, Bibletaught Christians today than at

any time in the past and that this age of grace is the most glorious of all ages that man has known on this earth. Let us emphasize the gospel of grace and teach others the truth of Ephesians 3:1 to 17.

We do “have a more sure Word of Prophecy whereunto we do well that we take heed as a light that shineth in a dark place,” but most of the prophecy here referred to will not be fulfilled during this age of grace while God is completing the Body of Christ. There will be the realization of Ephesians 4:13, before the awful prophesied things come upon the earth to be followed by the Millennium.

We are instructed to be workmen who are not ashamed, because we rightly divide the Word of Truth. Let us learn the difference between God’s program in this unprophesied “grace” period and His program in the coming prophesied “kingdom” age; and let us accordingly walk worthy of the calling wherewith we are called. But surely we must first know our calling.