

THE PROPHETIC WORD IN CRISIS DAYS

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by

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CHAPTER TEN

THE PROPHETIC WORD AND EUROPE

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The Lord Jesus Christ may come at any moment to translate the Church out of this earth into His presence. Many significant events point to the fact that this translation may be very soon. One of the most significant developments today is the movement toward a federation of states in Europe. It is this subject to which we want to direct your attention.

According to the book of Genesis, God chose Abraham and Abraham's seed, the nation Israel, to be the channel through which divine revelation came to the world that was in the darkness of sin. God took that nation out of the land of Palestine, which was to be their possession, in the time of their national infancy, and let them spend more than four hundred years in Egypt. After that time, when the nation had grown from seventy to more than two million souls, God by blood redemption delivered them out of Egypt. God preserved them through the wilderness, and brought them to the border of the Promised Land. Now it has been more than five hundred years since God had promised that land to Jacob. It was half a millennium since any of the sons of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob had set foot in that land. And as that multitude stood on the border of that land, into which God said He would bring them, the question would naturally come to mind, "Is this land of Palestine still our possession? Do we hold title deed to it? Or does our five hundred year absence mean that we have surrendered our rights in the land?"

The closing chapters of the book of Deuteronomy were written to bring God's message to this generation that is about to enter the land of Palestine again and possess it as their possession. God entered into a covenant promise, that we sometimes refer to as the Palestinian Covenant, in which He reaffirmed the promises He had earlier made with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob; namely that the land of Palestine belonged to Abraham and to Abraham's seed as an endless possession.

In Deuteronomy, chapters 28 to 30, God lays before the people the principle upon which He will deal with the nation when they come into the land. It can be summarized very briefly. God promised blessing for obedience and God promised chastening for disobedience. Now, notice that the disobedience did not cause Israel to forfeit their rights in the land, but disobedience did invite chastening from the hand of God upon that nation.

The blessings are outlined in Deuteronomy 28, verses 1 to 14. All manner of material blessings were promised for obedience. Beginning at verse 15, God announces the chastening will come if there is disobedience. This warning is climaxed in verse 47 as God anticipates the disobedience of the Chosen People.

“Because thou servedest not the LORD thy God with joy-fulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the LORD shall send against thee.”

God anticipated that the children of Israel would repudiate their allegiance to the Lord, the God of Israel, and would give allegiance to the false gods. God said,

“Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies, which the LORD shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee. The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young: And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which also shall not leave thee either corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine, or the flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee. And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the LORD thy God hath given thee.”

God is there predicting that His chastening upon the nation Israel will come through an invading army who will conquer the land and the cities in the land, and subjugate the people to the iron yoke of this oppressor. God continues this warning in verse 63.

“And it shall come to pass, that as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind: And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life.”

And in the latter portion of chapter 28, God is gathering together in this one prophetic foregleam all of the dispersions, all of the captivities, all of the judgments that will come upon the land of Palestine, and the people of Israel, through Gentile oppressors. Deuteronomy 28 shows us that God will chasten His people for disobedience, that the rod of chastening will be a Gentile power that will come into the land, and that the chastening will take the form of the destruction of the land, and the captivity of the people.

Will you turn to the 25th chapter of Jeremiah? We pass over a great span of Israel's history, during which Israel was turned aside to false gods, and went in spiritual adultery after heathen deities. God sent prophet after prophet to warn them and the warnings were rejected. Now Jeremiah is sent by God to deliver a message to the nation. It is the word to Israel that the prophecy of chastening predicted by Moses, in Deuteronomy 28, now will be fulfilled, and that an invader will march in and carry them off the land. Jeremiah 25:10 says,

“Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.”

Jeremiah announced that the invader is now about to come, that the invading army will overthrow Jerusalem and will carry the people of Jerusalem and Judah away into a Babylonian captivity, where the Word of God through Moses will be fulfilled.

From Jeremiah's prophecy let us turn to the prophecy of Daniel. Daniel was one of the men of the captivity who had experienced the fulfillment of that predicted by both Moses and Jeremiah. He had departed from Jerusalem to take up residence in Babylon. Because of his fitness he has been specially trained for responsibility in administration of government in Babylon. But Daniel has not lost his love for his people, for his home land. He has not given up the promises that God had given to the people of Israel; that God would send a deliverer, a Messiah, who would redeem them and reign over them.

Daniel was a careful student of the Scriptures that had been delivered to him by the prophets who had preceded him. He had been studying the Scriptures in order to see how these events fit into place. And Daniel recognized that he and his people were in Babylon because of God's divine chastening upon a sinning and guilty people. But the question that seems to be uppermost in Daniel's mind is, “What is to be God's program for Israel? What is God going to do for the land of Palestine? What is God's program for supervision over Israel until the time that Messiah comes?”

“The times of the Gentiles” is that extended period of time when the land of Palestine is occupied and ruled over by Gentile world powers. Historically the **“times of the Gentiles”** begins with Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of Jerusalem, and continues until the conquest of Jerusalem by the Son of God at the Second Advent to the earth. God's chastening for Israel was not to be of brief scope or duration. It was to expand over hundreds and hundreds of years. And Daniel gives to us the prophetic foreview of the **“times of the Gentiles,”** which will culminate in a federation of nations which must be destroyed by the King of kings and Lord of lords when He comes to this earth to reign.

In Daniel, chapter 2, you have the vision of the great image given to Nebuchadnezzar. In this familiar chapter, Nebuchadnezzar had a vision which he promptly forgot. He summoned his wise men to recall it and to interpret it, but they were unable to do so. Daniel was summoned but he was not able to recall the vision himself. He waited upon God and God gave him the vision to reveal to Nebuchadnezzar. Now we come down to the vision itself, described in verse 32.

“This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.”

We are not left to human speculation as to the interpretation, for Daniel is the interpreter of this vision. In verse 37, we read,

“Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. . . . Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron . . .”

Daniel clearly tells us that the four parts of this image are four separate world powers, one after the other of which will reign over Palestine. As you consider this image, several features will stand out quite clearly.

You will notice, first of all, that there is degeneracy that moves progressively from the head to the toes of that image. It begins with gold, degenerates to silver, degenerates further to brass, and then to iron and finally culminates in a mixture of iron and clay.

In the second place, while there is degeneracy in the materials, there is an increase in the strength of the materials. Gold is the weakest. The silver is stronger. The brass is stronger than the silver, and iron the strongest of all. And is it not until you come to the mixture of iron and clay that you revert to weakness again.

So it seems to suggest that from the divine viewpoint, there will be deterioration in Gentile world powers along with increased power or authoritarianism within the Gentile world powers themselves.

Daniel tells us that Babylon was the first empire, the Medo-Persian empire was the second, the Grecian empire the third, and the Roman Empire the fourth. In verses 38 and 39 we have three of these empires described. Two verses are devoted to three empires. Then in verse 40 we have the fourth empire described.

Almost as much space is devoted to the fourth kingdom as the previous three. Beginning at verse 41 and going down through verse 43, Daniel focuses his attention on the feet and the toes of the image. It is observed that Daniel devotes as much space to the feet and the toes as to all the rest of the image itself. Why? Daniel seems to attach special significance to the feet and the toes. Why does he do that? If you go back into verses 34 and 35, you will see why.

There he describes the stone that is cut without hands, — the stone that becomes a great kingdom and fills the earth. The stone smites the image. Where? Not at the head, not at the shoulders, not at the thighs, not at the legs, but at the feet.

Therefore, when the stone, which is the Lord Jesus Christ, comes to smite Gentile world power and subject the kingdoms of the world to Himself so that He might reign over the earth as King of kings and Lord of lords, He smites the image at the feet and toes, that is, in its final form. Let us look, then, at what Daniel has to say concerning the feet and the toes of this image. In verse 41 Daniel says, “. . . **thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided.**”

Now clay and iron cannot be mixed and fused together. You may put the molten iron and the clay together but they will never unite together and fuse together into a unit. They will remain separate. Daniel is emphasizing then, that whereas in the head, shoulders, thighs, and legs, there was unity, at the end of Gentile world power there is division.

He continues and says, “. . . **there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.**”

Will you notice the marginal reading? The word broken is translated *brittle*. Again, Daniel is emphasizing the fact of degeneracy in Gentile power and of weakness because of division.

“. . . thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.”

Daniel is speaking of the development of the fourth world empire, or the Roman Empire. He is telling us that from the beginning of the Roman Empire there would be progressive weakening and division. There would be division into the two legs, that is, into the eastern and western portion of the empire, and there would in turn be further division into the ten toes.

There would never be another kingdom that would supplant Rome as a Gentile world power that would reign over Palestine; but that the power that was centered in the Roman Empire would continue, and would become weaker through division so that in its final form, it would be partly strong and partly fragile.

We believe that we see today this divided state of the Roman Empire.

There are some people who refer to the final form of Gentile power as the “revived Roman Empire,” or the “restored Roman Empire.” I do not use those phrases in reference to Rome, for they infer the Roman Empire ceased to exist. However, the Roman Empire, as an empire or sphere of authority, never ceased to exist.

When Rome decayed, the power that once was in the Roman Empire, divided among separate states but there was never another empire that swallowed up the Roman Empire. There has been a continuation of the authority that once was in the ancient Roman Empire, divided throughout the nations of Europe. While the empire divided, the Roman Empire did not cease to exist. As we see the separate nations in Europe today, we see the final form of the Gentile world power in separation, division, and disunity.

A similar revelation is given in Daniel, chapter 7. In Daniel chapter 2, we have Gentile world power viewed from the human standpoint, where it is a great glorious, awe-inspiring image. In Daniel chapter 7, we have the same prophetic truth revealed but this time, from the divine standpoint; where Gentile world power is viewed under the likeness of four voracious, ravenous wild beasts.

When God looks at Gentile world power there is nothing attractive to Him in it.

In Daniel 7 we have four beasts which came up out of the sea. The sea, here, is a symbol of Gentile nations, so that Daniel is speaking of Gentile world powers. The first was like a lion, the second was like a bear, the third like a leopard. These three parallel the first three metals of the image in Daniel 2. Daniel passes by those three quite quickly and moves on to describe the fourth.

You will notice that Daniel is primarily interested in the last form of Gentile world power, — not the steps by which it would arrive at that stage, but the final stage itself.

The fourth beast is described in verse 7, **“dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it.”**

The Roman Empire swallowed up all previous empires that had existed before it. The Medo-Persians took over the territories of the Babylonians. Then the Greeks took over the territory of the Medo-Persians and Babylonians. Rome took over the territory of the Greeks who had swallowed up the Medo-Persians, who had swallowed up the Babylonians, so that Rome was the great embracing empire that **“devoured and brake in pieces and stamped the residue with the feet of it.”** Daniel describes a peculiarity of this beast and says in verse 7, **“It had ten horns.”**

Daniel is focusing his attention on the **“ten horns,”** as in chapter 2, he had directed attention to the **“ten toes.”**

The ten horns are ten kings and their kingdoms (Revelation 17:12). The emphasis is on the division of Rome into separate states. **“I looked at the horns, and there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.”**

Daniel introduces a new teaching in this line of revelation: one horn is going to get authority over the ten. There will be a federation of nations under one head. You can have no federation without some directive agent. Daniel is focusing attention upon the one who will be given authority over these nations, under whose leadership they will federate.

John, in Revelation 13, takes up where Daniel 7 left off. John sees a beast rising out of the sea, exactly as Daniel's beast rose out of the sea. This beast has seven heads and ten horns. The beast, was like a leopard, and his feet the feet of a bear, his mouth a mouth of a lion. These three are the first three of the four beasts of Daniel 9.

John looked to see where this beast got his power and his authority. The second verse states that the dragon gave him his power and his seat and his authority. The dragon was introduced in Revelation, chapter 12, and the dragon is identified there as Satan. There will be a movement of Satan to promote a federation of nations to bring together under one head the divided nations that have grown out of the Roman Empire. This desire of Satan is one important factor in the formation of the “Federated States of Europe.”

The nations of Europe that have grown out of the Roman Empire have reached a state of degeneracy and division. We are living in the days of the “**ten toes**” and “**ten horns**.” The world is awaiting the final federation. This will be accomplished out of fear of a power so great that it will threaten the peace, security and national existence of these ten toes or ten horns, the kingdoms that have grown out of the old Roman Empire. This power is Russia, lying to the north, described in Ezekiel, chapters 38 and 39, referred to there as “**Gog and Magog**.” The threat from Russian communism will be another factor driving the states of Europe into federation.

Revelation, chapter 17, gives another important factor bringing about the federation of European states. It is the political manipulations of a great politico-religious system, called the Great Harlot.

This harlot is the Roman Catholic Church. It is the desire of the Roman system to present themselves to the world as the last great defense against communism. In spite of the fact, that it is the Romanist dominated countries that have gone over most completely to communism. Rome wants us to believe that she is the strong defense against communism. Rome will move among the capitals of Europe to persuade the peoples of Europe and the nations within the old Roman Empire that they must come under her power and influence so that she can protect them against communism.

It is at that point, according to Revelation 17:2, 3, that the harlot sits in the saddle holding the reins of the beast. The activity of the Roman Church in political affairs will increase so as to have a greater and greater voice among the governments of the free world; to the point that the governments of the free world will submit to control by Rome. Through these means, the activity of Satan, the fear of communism and the political maneuverings of the Roman Catholic system, the states of Europe will be drawn together into a federation.

According to Revelation 17:12, 13, the ten horns, (the same “**ten horns**” that Daniel saw in Daniel 7 and that John saw in Revelation 13), “**have one mind and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.**”

Will you observe that the man who becomes the head of the federated states of Europe does not come to power by conquest.

He comes, first of all, by Satanic appointment. Satan gives him his power and his authority and his throne. Second, he comes to power by the consent of the nations of Europe, who have been persuaded by Rome that their only defense against communism is to unite.

They appoint a leader, whom they recognize as having authority over these kingdoms. These ten do not merge into one, they do not give up their separate sovereignty; they are ten separate individual states. Just as the clay and the iron cannot mix so the last form of Gentile world power will be divided but there will be an external federation of these individual kingdoms or states under the head of one man who becomes the lawless one, the man of sin of II Thessalonians 2.

The extent of his power is described in Scripture. In Revelation 13:7, we read, “. . . **it was given unto him** (this appointed ruler over the last form of the Roman Empire) **to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: Power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.**”

His will truly be a “one world government.”

In the middle of the tribulation period communism will be destroyed from off the face of the earth, the same way God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah in the Old Testament. This is described in Ezekiel 38 and 39. At that time this head of the federated states of Europe will expand his empire to the point that he has power over all kindreds and tongues and nations. Here is the Satanic counterfeit of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. For as the Lord Jesus Christ, at His Second Coming, will be given power over all kingdoms and tongues and nations, and will rule in righteousness and peace, so before the Lord Jesus Christ comes, Satan is going to give to the hands of his puppet, his masterpiece, world-wide authority. And it will be out of these federated states of Europe that there will arise this man of sin, this lawless one, who will subject the world to himself so that Satan might be worshipped as the god of this world.

At the close of World War II, European statesmen began a movement to formulate a united states of Europe because of the threat of the power of Russia. Attempts to formulate such a united states of Europe continue as a prime objective in international affairs. Without doubt, NATO was a preliminary move toward that end.

More recently, we have heard a great deal of discussion concerning the “common market.” There will be more and more of these movements until the time comes when the threat from Russia becomes so great that these nations will listen to the whisperings from the Vatican State, and they will be driven into a federation of states.

The world situation is such today that this federation could take place very very quickly. It would take only a little sword rattling from Russia, to bring these nations, in fear, to the election of a common head.

When we realize that the translation of the Church will take place before the world sees this federation of the states of Europe and when we acknowledge that this federation could take place almost immediately, it ought to give us the conviction that the Lord Jesus Christ could come very, very shortly to take us to Himself. God is setting the stage, the actors are in place, they are waiting for their cue to begin this play.

The cue is the trumpet and the voice of the archangel and the shout of God of I Thessalonians 4. We are not looking for the rise of the Beast. We are looking for the One who shall come in the clouds of Glory to translate us into His presence.

Many may ask, "Where will the United States be in all this?"

The United States is itself only the projection of this Roman Empire. Our peoples, our laws, our customs, our culture, our language are all the projection and the continuation of the old Roman Empire. It is suggested that the United States will be a part of this ten toed, ten horned federation, under the authority of the Beast, nudged into this alliance by Rome.

God has revealed His program in the Scriptures.

He has taken us into His confidence concerning that which He purposes to do, as He moves to bring His Son Jesus Christ to the Throne of Glory to reign over this earth. God has said that the earth must be judged. He has unveiled in the Book the judgments that will fall. But He has given to us that blessed and glorious and comforting hope that before these judgments break upon the world, we shall be translated into His presence.

We, who have accepted Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour, who have received the gift of eternal life, the forgiveness of sins, are looking for the Bridegroom who is coming for His Bride, and we join in saying, "**Even so come, Lord Jesus.**"

~ end of chapter 10 ~

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