

THE STORY OF DANIEL

by

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“Aunt Hattie’s Bible Stories” for Boys and Girls

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CHAPTER TWELVE

A STORY OF THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS CHRIST

What have you on your mind, Bill?” asked Glen, one of a group of high school boys lounging one summer afternoon beneath the cool shade of a spreading elm tree.

“I was thinking about Dr. Kennedy’s sermon that we all heard at church this morning. I’ll say he is a real preacher,” answered Bill.

“Dick, what is the matter with you? Do you not agree?”

“O sure, Glen, I always agree with you and Bill. I like Dr. Kennedy fine. But say, fellows, I have been a Christian only a few months and do not know my Bible at all. I know that was a good sermon this morning but I have been discouraged ever since.”

“Discouraged? Old man, how could you be?” asked his companions in surprise.

Dick sat in meditative mood, as he continued, “Dr. Kennedy preached this morning about the second coming of the Lord, and there were so many things he seemed to think that I knew, that I didn’t.”

“What, for example?” question Bill, as the interest of the group increased.

“I am ashamed of my ignorance but I might as well out with it. He spoke of the visions of Daniel, the unfilled prophecies to the Jews, the Church Age, the Rapture, the Tribulation, the Beast, the coming of the Lord in glory, the Battle of Armageddon, and a lot of other things that were Greek to me. I don’t believe I’ll ever get them straightened out in my mind. I do believe all of these things but I can’t find them in my Bible and I have a notion to give up and be a numbskull the rest of my life,” said Dick in great dejection.

“Never mind. You are not the only one who is bewildered. I, too, hate to own up, for I have been a Christian longer than you have, and yet I never have understood the things of which you have spoken,” put in Dale.

“Same here,” cried Donald.

“Glen, you are the leader of this particular gang of ignoramuses. Suppose you enlighten us,” requested his chums.

Glen’s countenance fell as he humbly said, “I am up against it, fellows. I do understand the Bible, in a way, but not well enough to explain these things to you. I’ll tell you what let’s do. Let’s go down to Dr. Kennedy and tell him our troubles.”

All agreed and in a few minutes they rang the bell at their pastor’s door.

“Come in, boys. Always glad to see you,” greeted their genial pastor with genuine sincerity.

“Dr. Kennedy, we have come to you to make a confession,” began Glen.

“Hope you haven’t taken my old Ford and forgotten to bring it back,” he laughed.

“No,” said Bill, taking up the task of stating the purpose of the call. “It is more important than a lost Ford. It’s your sermons. We do like to hear you preach, but you compliment us too much by thinking that we are Bible students. Most of us know little of the deeper things of God’s Word. We did not understand the background of your sermon this morning.”

The faithful pastor was puzzled for a moment and then asked thoughtfully, “Just what do you mean?”

Glen told Dick to name again the points as he had given them under the tree.

As he listened, Dr. Kennedy’s face was a study. At the conclusion he said, “Boys, I am the one to be blamed. I have been studying the Word of God so long that I guess I have taken it for granted that all of my listeners have done the same thing.”

“We do not want you to feel that way, but couldn’t you give us the main points of the second coming of Jesus Christ and the events in connection with it, sort of in order?” questioned the group.

Dr. Kennedy was master of the occasion at once and began, “Daniel’s visions are all about his own nation, the Jews, and that is a good starting place. God chose the Hebrew race as a people for Himself and gave to them great and precious promises. For instance, He promised to send His Son to earth, born of the Jewish or Hebrew nation. You and I can look back to that event as one literally fulfilled according to God’s Word. As you know, when Jesus came, He was rejected and crucified by His own race.

“And, because of her disobedience and sin, the race is scattered over the face of the whole earth, and since the captivity she has never had a national life or a king. But God promised the Jews that Palestine should be their home and that Jesus Christ, His Son and their Messiah, should one day sit upon the throne of His father David and reign in righteousness.

“I awoke one morning in the hotel at the northern entrance of Yellow Stone Park. Looking out from my window I saw a beautiful array of mountains with their snow caps piercing the western sky. What a challenge the mountains are. Whenever I see them I long to climb to each summit for the view it commands.

“Near the Roosevelt Gate is a foothill. If it were out here on our Iowa prairies we would call it a mountain. I said to myself that if my companion and I hurried, we could climb to the top of it before breakfast.

“After hasty preparations we set out. The air was invigorating and we began the climb with great enthusiasm. Up and up we went until the summit was attained. At least we thought it was the very top, but to our surprise we found we had only reached the top of one peak and lo, a great valley, a half-mile wide, stretched between us and the ascent of the greater mountain.

“Why, I thought it was all one mountain,” I exclaimed.

“It was one mountain with two peaks, although from the starting place it looked like only one great, glorious mountain.

“God gave to Israel two mountain peaks of prophecy; one pertained to the first coming of His Son, Jesus Christ, to suffer and die for the sins of the world, and against this are the prophecies of His second coming in power and glory. The men of Israel saw these two peaks as one. They longed for the Messiah to come and establish the kingdom promised to them, but they failed to see the necessity for the first coming in humility and suffering.

“They did not see the long stretch of years between the two peaks.

“Jesus Christ came as the prophets had foretold, every detail being fulfilled even to the place of His birth which was named hundreds of years before. But though He came to His own, His own received Him not. As a nation they rejected Him and put Him to death, and through His death He became the Saviour of the world.

“But He arose victorious over death and ascended into heaven at which time the angels said to the watching disciples upon Olivet, ‘**This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven.**’”

“Excuse me, Dr. Kennedy, but do you believe that will literally come true?” asked Dick in great surprise.

“How else could it be? Yes, I believe the angels were talking to us in our own language. The Lord Jesus went to heaven in His nailed-pierced body, glorified though it was, and He will come again with that same body. **‘They shall look upon Him whom they pierced.’**”

“Ten days after the ascension the Holy Spirit came from heaven and the disciples were filled with power and went out to proclaim salvation to a lost world. Peter offered Jesus Christ to the Jews as Saviour, but they rejected the offer and persecuted all who loved His name.

“Later Paul said to a company of Jews, **‘Be it known therefore unto you that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles and that they will hear it.’** Ever since those days the Lord has been calling out a people for His name. Any individual Jew or Gentile may have eternal life by believing upon Jesus Christ as His Saviour from sin.

“The body of believers, empowered on the day of Pentecost, is called the Church of Jesus Christ or His body of which He is the Head. Jesus calls Himself the Bridegroom and the Church His bride.

“This Church Age has now continued for nearly two thousand years. The Prophets have pointed out many things that will come to pass in the latter days before the Lord returns again. On the Mount of Olives just before His crucifixion the disciples asked Jesus about these things.

“He said, **‘Take heed that no man deceive you for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that you be not troubled; for all of these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.’**”

“**‘For nation shall rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All of these are the beginnings of sorrows.’**”

“When Jesus had finished He said, **‘Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, you know that summer is nigh; so likewise when you shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.’**”

“May I ask a question?” said Dale eagerly.

“Certainly. What is it?” answered Dr. Kennedy.

“What about the Jews all of these years?”

“That is just what I am coming to, Dale. The Jews, as a nation, have been set aside. As Moses prophesied they have become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all nations whither the Lord has led them.”

“Dr. Kennedy, what about the promises concerning the Jews that haven’t been fulfilled?”

“Glen, who is the author of these promises?”

“Why, God spoke them through His prophets.”

“Certainly. Then if God gave them, can one fail?”

“No, of course not,” cried the boys in one voice.

“Then do you mean to say that Christ will one day sit upon David’s throne in Jerusalem?” asked Bill. “I remember reading that the angel told Mary that very thing, and that He would reign over the house of Jacob forever.”

“What else could it mean? Boys, we must believe God’s Word as it is. Dr. Pettingill says—

‘if the sense makes good sense seek no other sense.’

If I understand my English Bible there was only one throne of David and that was a literal one in the city of Jerusalem.”

“My, isn’t all of this thrilling!” said the boys in a chorus of voices.

“But there are other prophecies for the Jews that await fulfillment. God said not only would they be scattered but that He would regather them into their own land of Palestine and that they would occupy all of the land from the Euphrates to the River of Egypt—a promise that has never been fulfilled, for in Bible times they possessed only a small portion of this territory.”

“That makes me think,” interrupted Bill, “I have been reading that there are more than three hundred thousand Jews in Palestine now. Is that the regathering?”

“I think it is the beginning but these Jews are not returning because they love God or His Word. They long for a national home for they are still in unbelief.”

“What are some of the other signs of the coming of the Lord that can be seen today?” asked Donald.

“Jesus said there would be signs in the sun, and the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

“And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.”

“Pastor,” broke in Bill, “that is just where we are today. Every day the newspapers tell of the perplexity of nations. The whole world is in commotion and no one seems to know what to do.”

“That is true and there are other signs,” continued Dr. Kennedy.

“Paul tells us in the second epistle to Timothy that in the ‘latter days perilous times will come when men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemous, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affections, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

“Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God;

“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away.”

“I wonder if all of that means nightclubs, beer-parties, sex-movies, joy-rides on lonely side roads, girls wearing men’s clothing or not much of any clothing. My! Isn’t the Bible up-to-date?” put in Donald.

“But haven’t we always had these things?” asked Glen.

“Yes, but never to such an extent as in this day. It was only a few years ago that a woman was rarely seen in a saloon. Now we have barmaids and women drink along with the men,” answered the pastor sadly.

“I have been attending some of these peace conferences. What do you think about them, pastor?”

“That is another sign, Dick, for Paul said in his first letter to the Thessalonians **‘But of the times and seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so Cometh as a thief in the night.**

“For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them . . . and they shall not escape.’

“As long as sin is in the hearts of men there will be wars throughout the world. There can be no permanent peace until the Prince of peace, even our Lord Jesus Christ, comes to earth again.”

“We begin to see a little bit of what it all means. Now please tell us briefly about the coming of Jesus Christ,” requested Dale.

“The second coming of Jesus Christ is a series of events. Paul tells of the first event in these words—

“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first;

“Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

“I do not understand how the dead in Christ shall rise first. I thought that when a Christian dies his spirit goes immediately to heaven.”

“And so it does, Glen, but the body rests in the grave. When the Lord descends He brings with Him these spirits which will be united with the resurrected and glorified bodies.”

“But suppose there is only dust that remains. What about those bodies that were blown to atoms in war?”

“My dear boys,” earnestly answered Dr. Kennedy, “God who made man has never lost so much as a particle of dust from His great universe and He can gather the bodies of His saved as easily as He can create them.

“Let us go on with our story. This event of which we have just been speaking is called the Rapture. It is sometimes spoken of as the Bridegroom coming for the Bride or of the Lord for His Church.

“Did you notice that Paul says, **‘the dead IN CHRIST shall rise first?’** This is the first resurrection. Then the living IN CHRIST shall be caught up with them to meet the Lord in the air. **‘This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.’** **‘Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.’** My daily prayer is that we may be ready for that glorious day.”

“What comes next upon the earth?” asked the boys now breathless with attention.

“As soon as the Church has been taken up, then the seventieth week of Daniel’s vision begins, the period known in the Bible as the Tribulation. By this time the nations in the territory formerly included in the old Roman Empire will be organized into a league under a dictator.”

“The Jews who have gathered in Palestine will be anxious to have their Temple restored and be privileged to worship God according to their law. The dictator will desire for his own benefit to keep on the good side of this nation within his borders and therefore he will make a covenant with them for seven years. If they will serve him he will permit them to worship God in their way. As for the whole world it will be a time of trouble.”

“I should think it would,” said Bill. “Imagine living upon this earth without a single Christian on it.”

“Will anyone be converted in this awful period of time?” asked Dale.

“Yes, many Jews will accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Messiah, and they will become flaming evangelists and go out over the whole world to carry the news of salvation to those who have never heard. However, I cannot see how those who have rejected the Lord Jesus Christ in this day of grace can find Him in that day.

“In the midst of the seven years the dictator, who is called the beast in both Daniel’s and John’s visions, will break his covenant with the Jews. Satan-possessed, he cannot endure to see Jehovah worshipped.

“For three and a half years the most terrible suffering and persecutions in the history of the human race will fall upon the people of the earth.

“If the time had not been shortened Jesus said there would be no men left in the whole world.

“Then the Antichrist will set himself up in the Temple of God saying that he is God and must be worshipped. It is enough, the cup of the wrath of almighty God is full to the brim.

“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 the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

“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 he treadeth the wine press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.”

“Then the great battle must occur,” anticipated Dick.

“Yes, and as this day draws near the armies of earth will gather for the great conflict in the Valley of Jezreel, or Armageddon, in Palestine. And, when the heavens open and the Lord and His armies ride forth, the armies of earth will arise to meet Him.”

“Will they use airplanes?” asked the boys.

“Yes, and all of the newest and most up-to-date war paraphernalia will be used, but the Lord is more than conqueror and the hosts of earth will fall before Him.

“Listen to John’s description:

‘And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

“And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

“And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season.”

“What will happen on the earth after this battle of Armageddon?” questioned the boys.

“Throughout these seven years closing with the battle, God shall have been cleansing the earth of all those who hate Him and now only a company of believers, including a great number of Jews who have been converted in this awful time, will live on into the new dispensation or Kingdom Age.

“The Lord will sit upon the throne of David in Jerusalem in the new Temple, the pattern of which is given to us by Ezekiel, and the long promise of God to Israel will be fulfilled.

“The Church will reign with Him in the heavenlies or over the earth.”

“Do you mean to say, Dr. Kennedy, that you and I will come back and reign with Christ over the earth through the thousand years?” queried Bill.

“Yes, that is exactly what I mean. The Bible is God’s Word and that is what it says. Listen to this, **‘Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.’**”

“What comes after the thousand years?” asked the boys anxious to get the whole story

“That is interesting, too, and the Bible tells us about it. During the reign of righteousness, with Jesus Christ as ruler, men’s hearts will not all be in submission to Him. Many are obedient because they fear not to be, for we read, **‘And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison.**

‘And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

‘And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.’”

“Oh, do tell us the climax of it all,” urged the boys.

“Then comes the judgment of the great white throne when all the wicked dead, small and great, shall stand before God.

‘And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.’

“Then John, to whom God gave this revelation said, **‘And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.**

“And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away . . . And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, (the first and the last) . . .

“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. . . . Surely, I come quickly . . . Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

It was a thoughtful, sober group of boys who had listened attentively to the wonderful story.

Dr. Kennedy concluded by saying, “I am glad that you have come to me today. But you must remember that in this short time I have given you only a bare outline of God’s prophecies. You will need to study them for yourselves.”

“That is my trouble. I can’t seem to find these things in the Bible when I do read it,” confessed Dick.

“Have you read about the G-men?”

“Indeed we have, Dr. Kennedy. We read every scrap we can find about them.”

“I thought you would say that. Now a G-man studies all that he can find about the Public Enemy for whom he is searching. He follows every clue, he examines handwriting and finger prints. He compares records with records. He looks for bits of clothing and foot-prints. He puts all of his evidence together and sums it up. He often spends many months in his search and then one day we read in the papers that he has captured his man.

“Boys, hear me! In Bible study, be G-men. Search the Scriptures. The handwriting is God’s. Bits of material found here and there pieced together may form a robe of righteousness. The footprints are marked with the blood of the Son of God. Fingerprint your Bibles by comparing scripture with scripture. It will require long hours of study to mine the treasures.

“You will find that ‘under every deep another deep opens, what seemed an end is but a beginning.’ If you are saved, you have the Holy Spirit to help you. Be prayerful and earnest, and, like the G-men, never give up and great will be your reward.

“My illustration thus far is satisfactory. However, from another view point it is just the opposite, for in reality you and I are the criminals under sentence of death and He, the Son of God, is seeking you and me, not to read to us the sentence of death but to give to us eternal life.

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.’ ‘Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me.’”

“Thank you, Dr. Kennedy, we will never forget this hour spent with you and we will surely study our Bibles with new interest and be looking for His coming. Goodbye!”

“Goodbye, boys!”

~ end of book ~

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