

Sermon to the Saints which are at Topeka, Kansas -- Sunday, January 5, 2020

“Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth.” (Isaiah 37:3)

“Go get the preacher! Get me a prophet of God on the scene, so we can put a right face on this terrible event that has been laid upon us by our Creator! With such bold blasphemy towards God, what can this mean?” Can you hear Hezekiah in your mind? His desperation and trembling fear about the severity of the spiritual and physical crisis? There is a mighty king ... the mightiest in the human realm at the time ... who has besieged Jerusalem. The Assyrian king Shalmaneser knew that he had been brought to great power and he sent the armies of Assyria to besiege Israel (2 Kings 18:9). Scripture teaches that the northern tribe of Israel was given to the hand of Assyria – finally conquered by Shalmaneser’s younger brother Sargon (Isaiah 20:1) – by an outraged God for the purpose of punishing the rebellious inhabitantsⁱⁱ. But, as with all human tyrants – and particularly those who have been granted renown in history as iterations of Antichrist – Sargon’s arrogant son Sennacherib went further than was allowed and thought to take the southern kingdom of Judah as well.ⁱⁱⁱ We know from Scripture how that turned out, and a great poem by Lord Byron gives a colorful rendition of the conflict.^{iv}

This historical event that defined the deliverance of Jerusalem in a miraculous fashion by the hand of God is helpful in the continuation in our examination of Daniel’s vision in the seventh chapter. In two previous sermons, I have examined with you the fourth beast of that chapter in four of his distinct characteristics, so far, as the words of Scripture detail.^v Of course there are many more such passages, but what I’ve brought forth covers the questions. All of this work in Daniel serves two purposes. First, to gain a greater understanding of the prophet and the amazing things shown him by God during a most significant period of time in Jewry. Second, because there is much provided in these prophetic words about the nature of things for Jews in eschatology, including how they will engage with both the seventh and then the final expression of Antichrist.

I’m not seeking to present myself as some expert on Jewish history or Jewry generally. What a frightful waste of time in meaningless trivia that exercise would prove to be. Humans are pitiful. As the psalm of David expresses, ***“verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah.” (Psalm 39:5)*** This labor is about preparing the saints of God – those who have been or will be called out, separated out (as Ben’s recent sermon described) to be God’s holy servants – who will face the dark and cataclysmic days when our Lord returns. What happens with the Jews is a front and center part of that, as discussed at remarkable length in Scripture. So, to be ready for that day, we should be knowledgeable about what those prophets wrote *about* that coming period.

I turn now to the characteristic identified in Daniel’s vision *of chapter seven*, where the crowning achievement of the beast is his blasphemy against God and perpetual harassment of His saints in the earth at the time of his dominion. This beast is discussed in chapter eight as well, and we will

address that in the proper time and place. The similarities in description in that vision help to understand what is in this *present* analysis, so let us begin with the relevant words of Daniel seven.

“[I]n this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things. ... I would know the truth ... of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things ... and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them ... and he [i.e., the horn] shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High”.

(Daniel 7:8, 19-21, 25)

These are the words from Daniel’s vision that bring into sharp focus this specific nature of the fourth beast – his blasphemy and assault on the saints. What is this speaking of great **“things”** and **“words”** identified here? So innocuous, is this word **“things”**. It causes the mind to drift into a place where one might be inclined to quickly lose sight of what is important, because there’s no definition, just these generic references to **“things”** or **“words”**. Interestingly, if you look at Strong’s concordance for the clause **“very great things”** all you will find is the Aramaic word **“rabrab”** (**“rab-rab”**), which simply means **“great”**. **“Things”** isn’t even discussed, much less examined or explained ... as though the passage was saying that this beast’s expressive horn was plainly speaking, and the substance was plainly of **“great”** moment. But what were the **“things”**?

Wonderfully, the scriptures are full of such amazing references when matters too great for the human comprehension are in the discussion. The human race, as the dominant creature that abides in the earth, has had all **“things put under his feet”** (Psalms 8:6). In this passage, we learn that it references all living creatures on the earth, in the first heaven, and in the sea (vv. 7-8). Because the human heart exceeds every other created thing in the capacity to be deceitful and wicked, it is declared **“above all things”** in this regard (Jeremiah 17:9). Though the human is the dominant created thing dwelling in the earth there are still impossibilities, but it is declared that **“with God all things are possible.”** (Matthew 19:26). Everything properly asked for in prayer to God, we will receive (Matthew 21:22); all spiritual and physical things are said to be possible to the saints (Mark 9:23); and work together for them (Romans 8:28); because they’re given to the saints by Christ’s sacrifice (Romans 8:32, 1 Corinthians 3:21). Because we’re in the spiritual conflict of our eternal lives, we’re instructed to make use of those things with temperance (1 Corinthians 9:25), and indeed consider them as dung when compared to the **“excellency of the knowledge of Christ”** (Philippians 3:8). For we know that it is by Christ all the old things passed away (2 Corinthians 5:17) and have all become new, made profitable through godliness (1 Timothy 4:8). Things. If you began to enumerate them, whether individually or even in categories, you would be mentally fatigued before you scratched the surface. There’s a value in using the term in contexts because there’s a value in having a proper understanding of how weak and insignificant we really are.

In the context of this passage, making use of this term actually helps us to understand that what is coming out of the mouth of this beast is substantial. The words and the thoughts those words bring to the hearts and minds of the target are substantial ... indeed, beyond the capacity to sustain,

except there be help present. There will be times when I'm talking with some one of my loved ones, and we'll begin to pull on a string of doctrinal or scriptural analysis that leads our hearts and minds down a trail that becomes so weighty ... so substantial to the grand scope of this creation and it's resolution ... that we will quickly pass from intense joy at the sight of it and then almost as quickly intense distress at our own incapacity to grasp it and take it all in. It is a state of heart and mind and spirit that I suggest is where these blessed friends of ours – facing this beast when he rises and squares off with them – find themselves almost perpetually. Get used to it, my loved ones. Make it your intimate friend! It could become our constant, and often fearful, reality.

“And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.”
(Revelation 11:7)

&

“And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.” (Revelation 13:1)

&

“And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them:” (Revelation 13:6-7)

&

“I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.” (Revelation 17:3)

In these verses out of the Revelation, we are having described for us the characteristics of the seventh and eighth expressions of the Antichrist ... or the beast that engages with the Gentile and Jewish saints during the Day of the Lord. We see this same *energy* of blasphemy against God and harassment – even to death for some – of those saints. I say energy of blasphemy because this character of Antichrist, and his expressions throughout the history of God's providence, is not that he merely speaks great and blasphemous things, but that it's his name! It is what he's known for; remembered for ... blasphemy! Pharaoh blasphemed God to Moses' face, Sennacherib blasphemed God to Hezekiah's face, Nebuchadnezzar to Daniel's and the three Hebrew children's faces, Rome's Herod mocked and blasphemed Christ Himself ... and though no name is recorded in Holy Writ, we have plenteous record of the blasphemous acts of the Grecian rulers and others throughout history.

It is the character of Satan to do so, so all those truly great rulers who are influenced in providence by Satan, as his antichrist expressions, are renowned for doing so.

There are two things, about this characteristic of the beast Daniel sees, that deserve some closer examination: Who are the saints here being warred with and worn out? What is the subject of these **“great things”** the horn speaks? I cannot imagine that all souls here who possess any gravitas in the matters of Scripture and godly living do not agree that every saint of God who has walked the earth has had warfare ... which has at least included things of great blasphemy spoken by the enemy of their soul. We have only just passed through the period of the year that serves as the pinnacle of blasphemy with their festivals and celebrations – ALL blasphemy against God. So it is a valid matter to bring words from God to bear in parsing these concepts as they apply in the context of the beast of Daniel seven. I trust that both examinations will help to understand better that we are dealing here with the Antichrist beast (and his kingdom) and understand what it tells us about Jews in eschatology.

Understanding that we are here seeing a prophecy with regard to Antichrist, we know that it is said in two places within the Apocalypse that he will **“make war against [the two witnesses], and shall overcome them, and kill them” (Revelation 11:7)** and **“make war with the saints and [] overcome them” (Revelation 13:7)**. The language in these two passages are very similar – the first adding the element of success in killing the witnesses – and are therefore used by various expositors to express the same behavior from the same man. That man, I believe Scripture compels us to conclude, serves as the seventh and eighth expression of the Antichrist (Revelation 17:8). He rises to his position of world influence and cements his popularity by overcoming and killing the two witnesses, bringing an end to what the earth-dwellers believe is *their* (not God’s) capacity to torment them. Celebrations erupt across the world while the bodies lie dead in the streets of Jerusalem until the celebration is interrupted by the rising of the two witnesses into the sky in their view (Revelation 11:10-12). Then, that seventh Antichrist head is slain at the sounding of the seventh trumpet and return of Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:8). Finally, the eighth Antichrist head rises from the wound unto death in the seventh Antichrist’s head (Revelation 13:3) to reign for three- and one-half years before leading the armies of the kingdoms of the earth into Armageddon for a final showdown with Christ. (Revelation 16:13-16; 19:11-21)

I’m discussing these nuances of the Revelation timeline so that we can do some discreet examination of Daniel’s vision vis-à-vis the conflict between the fourth beast in that chapter and the saints with whom he makes war and who he is said to **“wear out”**. Remember, as I have many times repeated in my examination of Daniel’s visions, that the subject of his writings is the Jewish people. This is the subject on Daniel’s mind and lips, and it is the subject about which he is tutored by the angel Gabriel. It is the conflict between Antichrist and the Jews reflected in this vision – and even more thoroughly in the vision of Daniel chapter eight and then the vision that spans from chapters

10-12. My focus in this series of sermons is likewise on the things happening with Jews, including between Antichrist and the Jews, in eschatology. This is a critical point of distinction when comparing the two scriptural prophecies for analysis. It is more than a semantic distinction. It is part of how the two portions of the gospel expressions are parsed and concluded – the Jewish and the Gentile.

While the redeemed Jews are sealed under the time of the sixth seal being removed (Revelation 7:1-8), they are going through a period of maturation and transition where they are coming out of gross darkness and being taught by the Gentile members of the Church of Revelation how to properly worship their Messiah, Jesus the Christ (Revelation 3:9). Since the close of the Gentile dispensation is contained in the first half of the seven-year dispensation of the Day of the Lord, those with whom the *seventh* expression of Antichrist chiefly does battle are the Gentile saints – led by the elders who at least include the two witnesses. Until the second advent of Christ, the New Testament Church dispensation has not closed. This dispensation – as I discussed in a previous sermon related to the Table (Lord’s Supper) – was *opened* by Christ during His first advent, and *closes* when He returns. That is what Peter was referencing when he wrote:

“Of which salvation the [Jewish] prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you [Gentile saints]: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ [1st Advent], and the glory that should follow [2nd Advent]. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves [the Jewish saints], but unto us [the Gentile saints] they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.” (1 Peter 1:10-12)

I’m not turning aside to that passage at present, for full exposition, but set it forth to demonstrate that there are characteristics of the Jewish and Gentile dispensations that are distinct, including that the two advents of Christ encompass the opening and closing of the distinctly New Testament Church dispensation. Since the *Jews*, on the other hand are the focus of Daniel’s visions, it is a proper conclusion that the *Gentiles* are not the saints made reference to in the vision of Daniel chapter seven. Rather, that vision is focusing on the engagement between Antichrist and the Jewish remnant of saints who have been spirited away to Mt. Zion to dwell in safety with Christ (Revelation 14:1) while the horrors of the seven vials are poured out upon the earth’s inhabitants – including the rage-induced slaughter of the apostate Jews.

The “risen” Antichrist of Revelation 13 is the human face of that rage Satan is declared to be expressing toward that remnant of elect Jews as the previous chapter closes:

***“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”
(Revelation 12:17)***

Satan, having been cast to into the earth to frettingly pursue the Jewish remnant – without the ease of access to the first or second heavens in which to operate (Revelation 12:13) – brings up the champion Antichrist to energize (with the assistance of the False Prophet) the human operation in stamping out the remaining Jewish saints of God. This is a hard period for those saints, freshly minted and still quite unexercised in the discernment of good and evil (Hebrews 5:14). This warring and wearing out process is gritty and strategic. One might be inclined to conclude that it is the equivalent of the discomfort we presently experience when the wicked men of the earth frame their mischief into laws (Psalm 94:20) to burden our lives and our ministry. But this matter being described in Daniel’s vision is more concentrated; more personal; more visceral.

Matthew Henry, in examining Daniel’s vision in this regard, makes a good observation: *“he will not cut them off at once, but wear them out by long oppressions and a constant course of hardships put upon them, ruining their estates and weakening their families. The design of Satan has been to wear out the saints of the Most High, that they may be no more in remembrance”*. When Christ is discussing the ferocious nature of Satan’s work against His Jewish remnant, he makes it seem so close and personal that one may despair of any hope that it would not even swallow them up!

“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:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: 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 24:15-21)

Again, the focus of *this present* sermon is not to parse out all of the nuances of this warning by Christ, because His words are so pregnant with meaning unique to the time, I fear I am inadequate for such a task – at least in my present state of knowledge. However, it is clear that once that seminal event occurs – ***“the abomination of desolation ... stand[s] in the holy place”*** – there is a period of physical and blasphemous onslaught against those gentle, redeemed souls like never before brought by men in the earth. Daniel, as he closes his final vision, expresses the presence of this same dynamic – in all respects consistent with the words of the chapter seven vision – saying ***“there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation [of Jews] even to that same time”***. (Daniel 12:1)

I have many times wrestled with exactly how the scene will look for those blessed Jewish souls who at that time will so recently have been set free in their spirits. Being brought forth in the midst of a

terrifying disruption in the earth – with literally billions being slain with the plagues the Lord God is bringing upon the inhabitants. Seals of trauma, trumpets filled with the most amazing and terrifying sights ... sounds ... smells. The intimacy between them and the elect Gentiles ... both groups being fully aware of the promised end and yet vexed with the insipid weakness of the flesh in doing combat with the full strength of Satan’s rage. Both groups having an understanding brought to them by God’s providence regarding how the Jews will be utterly and grotesquely destroyed – right before their eyes and with the hatred and slaughter threatening to break out upon them every minute. Then Christ returns and takes His Gentiles up to His Father’s throne. The seven vials begin to be poured out! What level of emotional fatigue will overcome their spirits? What exhaustion is prepared for our friends, who are told in this tremulous hour to desperately work at watching their garments lest they are not allowed into the wedding supper? (Revelation 16:15) They will be worn out! What tender soul could not be, even while knowing the prepared end of the matter?

Now, let’s discuss this issue of blasphemy. Through a number of different root Hebrew words, you get a strong sense of what the English word *blasphemy* means. There’s “*gadaph*” (“*gaw-daf*”) – used, for example, when God sends Ezekiel to speak to the “***house of Israel and say unto them, ... your fathers have blasphemed me***” (Ezekiel 20:27) – which means “to hack (with words), i.e. revile – blaspheme, reproach.” There’s “*charaph*” (“*khaw-raf*”) – used, for example, when God spoke through Isaiah to ensure the recompense would be returned for the “***iniquities of your fathers ... which have ... blasphemed me upon the hills***” (Isaiah 65:7) – which means “to expose (as by stripping); specifically to betroth (as if surrender); figuratively, to carp at, i.e. defame”. We have also “*na’ats*” (“*naw-ats*”) – used, for example, when God spoke of the behaviors of those who put Israel into captivity where He says “***my name continually every day is blasphemed***” (Isaiah 52:5) – which means “to scorn; to bloom [spring forth quickly] abhor, (give occasion to) blaspheme, contemn, despise, provoke”. In the Greek, all references to this practice spring from a root word “*blapto*” (“*blap’-to*”) which simply means to “hurt, harm, injure”. When the additional tenses are applied, it then refers to hurting by words – “slander, detraction, speech injurious, to another’s good name; impious and reproachful speech injurious to divine majesty”. This sense is used most popularly in the passage faux-Christians make use of when filled with their own self-righteousness about another’s words and want to quote Christ: “***but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven.***” (Luke 12:10)

Friends, the difficulty in grasping the strength of Daniel’s vision about the fourth beast – and that little horn that comes up among the other horns, “***with eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things***” (Daniel 7:8) – is that the general sense of what constitutes blasphemy gets too watered down in our collective thinking. When in the strictest sense we hear or see the name of God and Christ blasphemed in nearly every medium – how can we distinguish the work of this little horn? How do we know what we’re looking for, so that when he rises in the earth he appears to a learned and prepared batch of saints who are therefore able to sustain him? Daniel says he was “***grieved in***

[his] spirit". He tells that angelic friend that he ***"would know the truth of the fourth beast ... [that had] a mouth that spake very great things"***. This blasphemy coming from the beast is a remarkable part of his character that distressed our fellow laborer ... and he was clearly shown to be the pitch enemy of the saints with whom he would ***"make war"***. What, then, is this remarkable characteristic? What, then, is this blasphemy?

It's about the covenant. Within all the white noise – that makes up the beautiful and intricate words of Scripture to the unexercised – are the landmarks of the great ***"quarrel of [God's] covenant" (Leviticus 26:25)***. Bluntly, it is a thing that cannot be talked about enough. Humans, even those gifted with the mercies and graces – the myrrh often spoken of that Christ pours upon the virgin Bride in Solomon's song – are so easily fatigued with deep things that the earth-destroying gravity of the matter is missed. Please understand the strength of this point. Worlds – indeed, all of the created universe – is subject to God's disposal vis-à-vis this amazing covenant. It is not ***a*** thing ... it is ***the*** thing. All of the spiritual realm knows this and is engaged in the quarrel over it ... and we should happily do so ourselves. The battle rages continually over this covenant and has the involvement of forces that easily undo whole human armies and kingdoms, with all their vaunted military might. When blasphemy enters *that* forum, it indeed involves ***"great things"***.

We need to see the context of the work of this fourth beast (i.e., great kingdom) and the man who will emerge triumphant over the politic. In the day-to-day providence surrounding this tiny earth and her inhabitants, fools mock at sin, they prop up idols in their hearts, they chase sins of the spirit and flesh with both hands, they mock the messengers of God, they despise His words and misuse His prophets. Because of this, there have been – and daily are – severe consequences. Some we see and joyfully praise God about; others happen in places and ways that remain secret to our knowledge and voice, but we know it justly happens. None of that is what Daniel is seeing. None!

***"Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."* (2 Peter 3:6-7)**

The worldwide context of this scene on Daniel's spiritual dreamscape is unseen in human experience; save the flood of Noah. That former horror has been reduced, by satanic deceit over millennia, to a harmless children's story that joyfully now includes sodomites on the floating boat and gospel preachers sinking in angry waves. How perfect is that preparation in the blinded hearts of mankind, so they are unable to even understand what lies in front of them? In truth ***"they willingly are ignorant of [that fact]" (2 Peter 3:5)***. In fact, though, as this fourth kingdom rises, and Antichrist expresses himself in both the seventh (Revelation 11) and eighth (Revelation 13, 17) iterations, the world is in utter distress. The seals have been removed from the great book that Steve will discuss soon. The seventh trumpets are blowing chaos across the globe, meting out misery and death in numbers that cannot be comprehended. Christ's second advent has put the fulfillment of the covenant into the vortex of the raging conflict among those who still dwell on the

earth – and the seven vials of God’s wrath bring the condition to a boil. The inhabitants of the earth so desperately want Him and His saints gone, they move like zombie hordes into the final conflict (as they see it).

That is the context of the **“great things”** spoken by this **“little horn”**. In *that* context, the only subject that matters is the covenant. Will the created world be redeemed by Christ, or will it be owned and operated by his majesty the Devil? Will the Gentile saints in the earth be remarkably sustained against all the strength of men and demons, and find themselves translated and joined with the dead in Christ who will rise triumphantly from their graves and meet Him in the air? Will the Jewish saints – who have been called out and sealed and had their filthy rags replaced with clean garments – be forgiven for their sins and betrothed again to God and dwell in Christ’s renewed kingdom in the earth? The blasphemous tropes with which we presently do forensic battle will fade at that hour; the conflict has been amped to a fevered pitch and it takes a level of gumption and audacity that Satan moves this **“little horn”** to express. Here’s how the prophet Joel expressed it:

“¶ Then will the LORD be jealous for his land, and pity his people. Yea, the LORD will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen: But I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea, and his hinder part toward the utmost sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because he hath done great things. Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will do great things.” (Joel 2:18-21)

The great things and blasphemies of this beast Daniel is given to see rise in the latter time will be answered. The blasphemies of this rising king – energized by that rebel angel Satan – will be recompensed. Those who were worn out by that arrogant king’s abuses and threats and slaughters will receive the jealous vengeance and gentle pity of God.

There are yet three characteristics that Scripture help us to understand from this fourth beast in Daniel’s chapter seven vision.^{vi} Much of the work done in this examination will not have to be repeated, only referenced, when we begin our work on subsequent chapters and visions ... so I plan to take my time in looking closely at this specific Antichrist vision Daniel received. When I was searching the scriptures for a better and more thorough understanding on the two main points I examined today – his blasphemy and his warring with the saints – I came upon a passage from King David’s psalms. While Bible scholars could disagree on whether it is exclusively eschatological in import, or blended with a temporal struggle our friend endured from his enemies, the words are of value to examine in closing this sermon:

“Deliver me, O LORD, from the evil man: preserve me from the violent man; ... Grant not, O LORD, the desires of the wicked: further not his wicked device; lest they exalt themselves. Selah. ... Let not an evil speaker be established in the earth:” (Psalms 140:1, 8, 11)

The passage is a beautiful expression of the distress and grief those coming Jews will feel in the face of this atrocious enemy – regardless of anything additional you might find. Last time I preached on this subject, I talked about the prophecy of Ezekiel regarding the mysterious rise of Gog and his armies to punish the rebels of Jewry and terrify the saints. I was amazed when that old expositor Dr. Gill put into his exposition a quote from an earlier expositor that puts the same understanding of Gog’s work not only to eschatology generally – but to the relationship of David’s words to that coming time, to wit:

Gill: “R. Obadiah says, [this Psalm] was made at the persecution of David by Saul, which was before the kingdom of David; as the persecution (of Gog) is before the coming of the Messiah. It is indeed before his spiritual coming, but not before his coming in the flesh [in His first advent]; and David may be very well considered in the psalm as a type of Christ, for he was particularly so in his sufferings, as well as in other things.”

We have remaining from Daniel’s vision to understand the time this little horn is given, how he is to be disposed of, and what magnificent display will replace him. I love speaking of these things with my friends here. I often struggle to see how it can be that a little band of saints can withstand such evil, but when Christ grants the gifts of grace and the spirit of **“power, and of love, and of a sound mind” (2 Timothy 1:7)** no part of the creation can shake us – or those who are of like faith and order. Please continue to search these things out and ask me questions. The Bible is filled with this glory, as is the whole earth and the universe. We should take it in and pray continually for edification.

I love you all. Amen.

ⁱ Here is the full context of this sermon’s opening verse, demonstrating why Hezekiah sent this report:

“¶ And it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. And he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests covered with sackcloth, unto Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz. And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth. It may be the LORD thy God will hear the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God, and will reprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left. So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah. And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say unto your master, Thus saith the LORD, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.” (Isaiah 37:1-7)

ⁱⁱ See this declaration of the prophet Isaiah regarding the use of Assyria to punish Israel:

“¶ Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed; To turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless! And what will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which shall come from far? to whom will ye flee for help? and where will ye leave your glory? Without me they shall bow down under the prisoners, and they shall fall under the slain. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still. ¶ O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few. For he saith, Are not

my princes altogether kings? Is not Calno as Carchemish? is not Hamath as Arpad? is not Samaria as Damascus? As my hand hath found the kingdoms of the idols, and whose graven images did excel them of Jerusalem and of Samaria; Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her idols?" (Isaiah 10:1-11)

ⁱⁱⁱ Continuing the prophecy of Isaiah, here is the consequences for the arrogant king of Assyria:

"Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks. For he saith, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent: and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man: And my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs that are left, have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped. Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood. Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness; and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire. And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day; And shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, both soul and body: and they shall be as when a standardbearer fainteth. And the rest of the trees of his forest shall be few, that a child may write them."
(Isaiah 10:12-19)

^{iv} Here is the text of the poem "The Destruction of Sennacherib" by Lord Byron:

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail:
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

^v See sermons addressing the fourth beast of Daniel chapter seven: Daniel's Vision (Cont), Jews in Eschatology Part Eight - 8/18/19 <https://tinyurl.com/WBC20190818PDF>; and Daniel's Vision (Cont), Jews in Eschatology Part Nine - 11/10/19 <https://tinyurl.com/WBC20191110PDF>.

^{vi} Here are the characteristics listed in the August 18, 2019 sermon on the fourth beast of Daniel seven. What remains after this sermon are the final three:

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- It will be a great kingdom that has a character unlike any kingdom ever before known to mankind – “shall be diverse from all kingdoms” (v. 23).
 - It “shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.” (v. 23)
 - It is a kingdom that is “dreadful and terrible”, causing (as the Aramaic word intimates) those over whom it rules to “shrink back, crawl away” in fear.
 - It is made up of ten kings initially, after which three are subdued under one that is exalted to preeminence in the kingdom.
 - The crowning achievement of the preeminent ruler is his blasphemy against God and perpetual harassment of His saints in the earth at the time of his dominion.
 - *The dominion of this ruler is limited strictly to three- and one-half years; “a time and times and the dividing of time.” (v. 25)*
 - *The preeminent ruler is destroyed and delivered to the “burning flame” (v. 11)*
 - *A concomitant event to the ruler’s and kingdom’s destruction is the vision of “one like the Son of man [coming] with the clouds of heaven” (v. 13) who is then given “dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him”. (v. 14).*