

DANIEL AND
THE LATTER DAYS

Robert D. Culver

Moody Press
Chicago

Copyright, 1954

Preface

One of the first indications of the purpose of the dreams and visions of the book of Daniel is that it is to give light on things "hereafter" and during "the latter days." So it is no surprise to learn before one reads far in the book that Daniel is devoted largely to revelation of the future.

It is for this cause that Daniel never fails to attract the interest of the reader, whether he be worldly curious or devoutly faithful. A flood of literature on Daniel has been the inevitable result.

The "interest factor" is probably one of the strongest elements in my desire to prepare this my second treatise on the Book of Daniel. But the most important element in the desire was, and is, to test in the crucible of the entire written Word of God the Premillennial system of interpretation which I have been led to believe is the key to predictive prophecy in the Bible. I say to test--though candor might force me to say "to justify" or "to substantiate." For convictions of many years, based, I felt, on clear pronouncements of the Bible, have probably rendered the study something less than completely unprejudiced. Nevertheless, I have tried to be objective. How successful I have been will be judged by the reader.

Grateful acknowledgment is made to The Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. for permission to quote from *The American Standard Version of the Bible*, and to all others from whom such permission has been secured in every case in which permission was known to be required.

May the Holy Spirit bless these efforts and those who read, that they, like Daniel, may have their rest and stand in their lot at the end of the days.

R.D.C.

Preface to Second Edition

The present edition of *Daniel and the Latter Days* is essentially the same as previous printings except for correction of misprints, refinement of one or two points of exegesis, and a change of view with regard to interpretation of II Thessalonians 2:7-10. Although new literature on the "millennial question" has continued to appear, the last decade has not been especially fruitful--only enough to show that scholars have not forgotten about it. No evidence or argument has come to the author's attention which did not appear in earlier publications in similar form.

The author has supplemented his argument by "A Neglected Millennial Passage from St. Paul," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, April, 1956; "The Difficulty of Interpreting O.T. Prophecy," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, July, 1957; *The Sufferings and the Glory of the Lord's Righteous Servant*, Moline: Christian Service Foundation, 1958; "Daniel," *Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, Chicago: Moody Press,

1962; and "Were the O.T. Prophecies Really Prophetic?" *Can I Trust My Bible?*
Chicago: Moody Press, 1963.

Introduction

Nearly fifty years ago a very learned and devout Biblical critic wrote: "The commentaries on Daniel are innumerable. On no other book, save the Book of Revelation in the New Testament, has so much worthless matter been written in the shape of exegesis" (Charles H. H. Wright, D.D., Ph.D., *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, p. 197). A recent critical writer (H. H. Rowley, *Darius the Mede and The Four World Empires*) lists over 400 works consulted in investigation of one historical and one expository problem in Daniel. Each year witnesses the publication of new commentaries on all or parts of the book. In view of all this one might reasonably ask, Why another book on Daniel?

In the first place, let it be said that the fact that so much is being written and read on the subject manifests a continuing lively interest in the Book of Daniel. Furthermore--and this is the real occasion for this treatise--there is a great need today for just such a work as the writer hopes this one will prove to be. To my knowledge no work of this type has ever been written in recent times. I have in mind a work that will first of all frankly take the Premillennial approach, lay a sound basis for acceptance of that position in the whole of Scripture, and then proceed to show that this method of exposition alone can satisfactorily explain the Book of Daniel. Such a work should do justice to the linguistical data of the book and should approach the book in the original Aramaic and Hebrew. Several such works from Amillennial and Postmillennial writers are available--some quite recent, but nothing of the sort by a Premillennialist. Many Premillennial commentaries on Daniel have been written, to be sure, many of them of very superior quality, some of them less than worthless. It has not suited the purpose of any I have read to explain first the Premillennial eschatological position assumed, nor to show why it had been adopted. This is not blameworthy--it simply did not suit the purpose of the author to do so.

But a time has come when Premillennialists had better examine the foundation of their peculiar faith. Others are examining it and think they find it wanting in many respects. Pious men of unquestioned Christian faith are vigorously sponsoring other systems of eschatology. It will not do to ignore these men--it would not be honest to do so, nor would it exemplify the courtesy we expect from them. Neither can we "cast them out of the synagogue" of orthodoxy simply because they do not agree with us in some aspects of eschatology. The proper thing to do is to hear what they have to say, learn what we can from them, and then judge their sermons and their books as we judge our own--by the light of God's Word. To do so will be a wholesome experience for us all. It is a craven kind of Christian faith which fears to examine the content of its creed in the light of honest criticism.

The writer has tried to do just this and has learned much. He hopes that this book, which represents a part of the fruit of his research, will be of real aid to others who earnestly desire to know the truth of God about the future as revealed in the Scriptures.

Some time I hope to write a commentary on all of Daniel--a commentary on every verse, giving proper attention to the critical, doctrinal, and practical

aspects. But now my purpose is different. I wish to provide a basis for a consistent explanation of the book. If all the predictions concerning the nations culminate in Antiochus Epiphanes in the second century B.C., that is one thing. If they converge upon the events of the lifetime of our Lord in the first century following His first advent, that is another. If, however, prophecy of the nations is carried down to the end of the present age, that is still another. If Israel is to be restored to a position of national favor at the close of the present age, that is one thing. If God is finished with Israel as a nation, that is still another. To propose an answer to these questions on which Christians continue to hold divergent opinions is the purpose of this study. Since I write as a Premillenarian it will require that I first find a basis for the Premillennial view in the Bible as a whole, and then, using the original Hebrew and Aramaic of Daniel as the authoritative source, proceed to show that the Premillennial approach explains the prophecies of Daniel in the most satisfactory manner. It will be neither convenient nor necessary to treat everything in the prophecies, but only those portions which are pertinent to the main question. This question may be phrased, *Can Premillennialism give the best explanation of the predictions of the Book of Daniel?*

It is taken for granted that not everyone who may read this treatise will be pleased. Not the liberal critics, for I will treat this book with the reverence due a work inspired of God and hence accurate in historical details. Not the unconvinced Postmillennialists and Amillennialists, for I hope to show them that on the points at which we differ they are wrong. Not all Premillennialists, for I have been convinced that our critics and opponents have in the last couple of generations found many weak points in the writings and sermons of some of the less cautious and uncritical of our number, and have uncovered not a little unfounded prejudice, pride of opinion, error, and even of fanaticism in our midst. For this I can give them nothing but the heartiest of thanks and pray that all my Premillennial brethren will do the same.

R. D. C.