

DANIEL IN THE CRITICS' DEN  
Lesson 89

Memory Text: "There shall come in the last days scoffers."  
11 Peter 3:3

Most Christians do not suffer physical persecution today. They are not burned at the stake nor thrown into a den of lions, as Daniel was. But they are frequently attacked by critics, scoffers, people who believe that Christianity is a weak and foolish religion.

Sometimes these Higher Critics argue loudly, but more often they walk away when we speak of the wonderful Kingdom coming, or smile with pity at our stupidity. One of our most powerful enemies is the university or college or high school or grade school which considers itself too intelligent to believe the promises of the Bible. Their teachers either ignore Scripture or make fun of it.

Some people call themselves Christian, but they do not mean that they want to be like Christ. They mean that they appreciate the beautiful poetry of the Psalms just as they enjoy Shakespeare's literature and other poets'. They often feel that Jesus showed good common sense in his teachings, and that he was a remarkable teacher.

Once, an honest man politely told a Christian, "I am sorry, but I cannot believe the Bible. I cannot believe that a God of love would torture people in eternal fire; I cannot believe that Jesus is the Son of God and yet he is God and yet he prayed to God -- that doesn't make sense; I cannot believe that a Heavenly Father could watch the suffering of this world and not care or be powerless to help."



Memory Text: "The time of the end: many shall run to and fro." Daniel 12:4

Everybody knows that there has been a greater development of knowledge along every line within the past century than during the preceding 5,900 years. Everybody knows that the modern conveniences of our day were all unknown a century ago.

But although we know this to be true, these things have come gradually and naturally. So we give credit to the inventors and are impressed by science. It is easy to forget that the time is come which the Bible promised as the day of abundant blessings. These are foregleams of Messiah's Kingdom in which the curse will be fully removed.

The Scriptures declare the coming glory of earth. God shall make the place of His feet glorious. The whole earth shall be a paradise. Many great scientists, who know very little of the Biblical prophecies, marvel at present scientific discoveries and realize that more will follow.

Are we not in the midst of the "running to and fro" which Daniel 12:4 predicted? We must, therefore, be living in the Time of the End. This is the time in which the Gospel Age will gradually close and the Millennial Age dawns with its abundant blessings.

Make a list of the transportation you have used in your lifetime. Make a list of the transportation your parents use. Make a list of the transportation your grandparents use. If you live in the country, your list will be different from that of a city boy or girl; but I venture to say that not many have

"MANY SHALL RUN TO AND FRO"  
Lesson 90

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Find a newspaper clipping showing a Biblical prophecy fulfilled.
2. Name modern inventions that were unknown 100 years ago.
3. Draw a modern method of transportation in the space above.
4. Why didn't men before Watt consider the power of steam for transportation? In other words, why have inventors made such rapid progress in the last 100 years? Is it that men are now more intelligent? Exodus 31:6; 36:1.
5. How has improved transportation increased knowledge?
6. Why did men know how to construct the marvelous pyramids of Egypt but not make great improvements in transportation?
7. Is improved transportation ever used for evil causes?
8. How long did it take the pioneers to cross the nation? How long does it take today?

"KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED"

Lesson 91

Memory Text: "As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall the presence of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:27

2500 years ago God foretold through Daniel's prophecy that in the time of the end knowledge would be increased. When a child is born into this world of television and jet planes, it is hard for him to realize that his parents did not always have these conveniences! His grandparents can recall the crystal set radio with earphones that was welcomed into their homes as a modern invention, and have you seen snapshots of the automobiles they rode in when they were young?

Yet your grandparents are not one hundred years old. It is only in the last hundred years that progress has been so rapid that a product is old-fashioned before you buy it. Something newer has already been invented. This is the increased knowledge which Daniel prophesied.

When Jesus said that his second presence would be like lightning, he was illustrating the enlightening effect his presence would have on mankind; that it would result in knowledge covering the entire world.

About five hundred years ago printing began to be used in Germany. Until that time books were written in pen and ink, like a letter you might write to a friend. How many newspapers or encyclopedias would you have time to write? Can you see why there weren't very many books in those days?

Today, if you want to learn to type or sew a dress or build a garage, you read the instructions which a successful craftsman has written. Instead of spending the time to figure it all out.

"KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED"  
Lesson 91



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Does increased knowledge make people more content?
2. How would truth be affected by knowledge?
3. Is a person more afraid of the known or the unknown?
4. What would have happened to the world if everyone would have known how to read and write 500 years ago?
5. Explain why the Catholic Church and the Kings of the 16th century became alarmed at the influence of books on the people?
6. What characteristic in man causes him to use knowledge incorrectly?
7. How many people go to college these days?  
How many people went to college when your parents were in school?  
How many people went to college when your grandparents were young?
8. Does more general knowledge make people appreciate religious Truth more?
9. Explain Isaiah 29:14.

"A TIME OF TROUBLE"

Lesson 92

Memory Text: "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 24:21

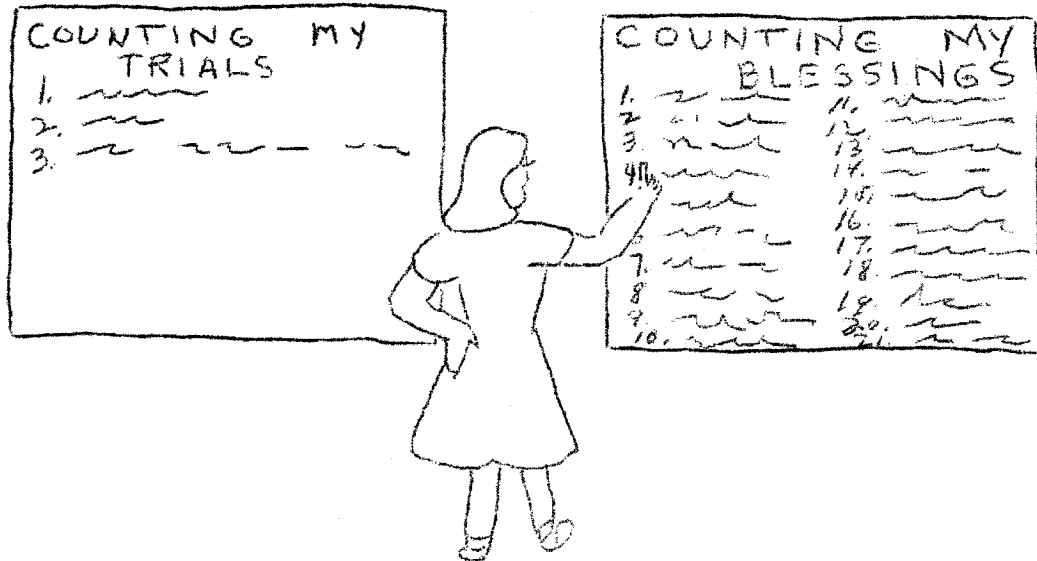
"Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:25-28.

When the newspapers report revolution, anarchy, discontent, strikes, and union trouble, these scriptures are being fulfilled.

Too much pride could be one reason for those leaders in control of world affairs to favor war. The wealth of the world is poured into war efforts, but more important is the terrible death toll which wars take. Notice that young men who enter military service must be the healthiest specimens of their nation. And we cringe to read of the innocent children who suffer from battles which reach into their homes. But as "wars and rumors of wars" (Matthew 24:6) increase our faith in the prophecies of the Bible, so we should cheer others with the happy ending of these prophecies.

Anyone who understands anything about our nation's finances will tell us that we have an amazing debt. Most people owe someone money. Buying on credit and getting loans from a loan company and having huge mortgages are a way of life today; fifty years ago, these were considered foolish acts which only careless people would perform.

"A TIME OF TROUBLE"  
Lesson 92



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. How should a Christian act when the world is full of trouble?  
I Thessalonians 5:6,9,16-18
2. Are people more eager to hear about the Kingdom when they have trouble or when they have every happiness they desire?
3. How should a Christian feel when trouble comes to him?  
Romans 8:28
4. Brother Russell (WT 686) writes: "sea is a symbol of the unrestrained and uncontrolled masses of mankind not submissive to either civil or religious control." Explain how this sea roars, as in Luke 21:25.
5. Brother Russell (WT 4943) writes "waves (the restless, discontented)...earth (society)...heavens (nominal churches). Explain how these fit into Luke 21:25-28.
6. Brother Russell (WT 5269) writes: "coming with clouds would signify the coming in a period of trouble -- the word 'clouds' being used to signify trouble." When our newspapers tell us of all the unusual and awful trouble in the world, what do we know about Jesus?
7. Should a Bible Student pray for peace in the world?
8. Should we be proud of our understanding of God's plan?
9. Will it do any good for the people of earth to unite for the purpose of strengthening their present organizations? Isaiah 8:9-12

CATHOLIC, MILITANT, TRIUMPHANT

Lesson 93

Memory Text: "To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written; this honor have all his saints." Psalms 148:8,9

The true Church is assured of triumph: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Luke 12:32.

But they are not supposed to fight for their rights. It was a terrible mistake when the Church went to battle, using swords and spears against nations or against heretics.

When glorified in heaven, the Church (Head and body) will have power over the nations, ruling them with a rod of iron, breaking them to slivers as a potter's vessel. Revelation 2:26,27. After the sinful kingdoms of this Gospel Age are destroyed, the LORD of hosts will cause "the desire of all nations to come." Haggai 2:7. This is what all creatures are waiting for. Romans 8:19 and 16:20. This is what all Christians pray for. Matthew 6:10. But while on earth neither Jesus nor the Apostles interfered with earthly rulers in any way. On the contrary, they taught the Church to submit to these powers, even though they often suffered under their abuse of power. They taught the Church to obey the laws, and to respect those in authority because of their office, even if they were not personally worthy of esteem. Romans 13:1-7; Matthew 22:21. The Lord Jesus and the Apostles and the Early Church were all law-abiding, though they were separate from, and took no share in, the governments of this world.

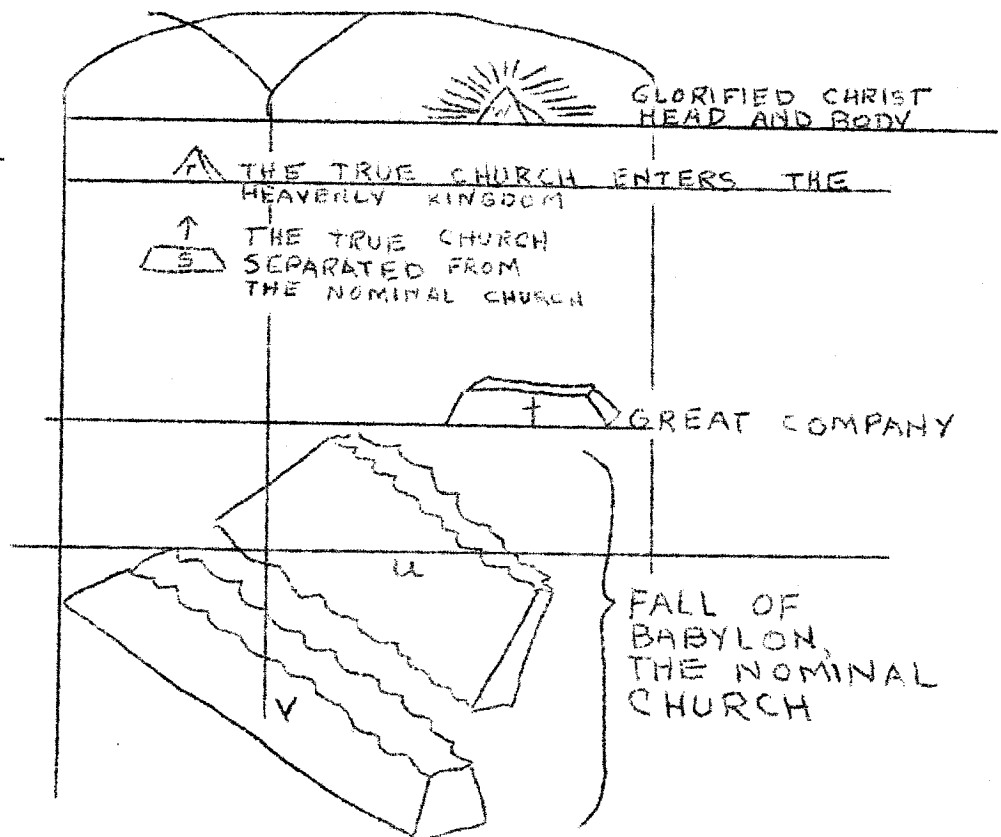
The governments of this world were permitted by God. They provided an experience which was needful to man. The consecrated

CATHOLIC, MILITANT, TRIUMPHANT  
Lesson 93

HARVEST  
OF THE  
GOSPEL  
AGE

Volume I  
Study XII

"Judgment  
must begin  
at the  
house of God"  
I Peter 4:17



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Webster's Dictionary says that CATHOLIC means "of general interest or value, having broad sympathy and understanding." Which church has the greatest value, sympathy, and understanding?
2. Should God's church be at war?
3. What were the Crusades and Holy Wars?
4. Should Bible Students fight in war?
5. What is the Christian armor?
6. What does "militant" mean?
7. When will the Church be triumphant?
8. Who will receive the everlasting kingdom to rule? Daniel 7:27
9. What will the Lord do to the nations? Isaiah 34:2
10. Will there be a happy ending? Zephaniah 3:8,9
11. Are the governments the only ones to be judged? (WT 5048)
12. Revelation 18:21 speaks of the nominal church as "that great city Babylon." What will happen to that organization?