

DAILY BIBLE READINGS - Week of December 27, 2020

**THEME: "The Lion of Judah"
KING OF THE JEWS**

Sunday Read Matthew 2:1-10

"Where is He who is born King of the Jews?" How did these wise men from the East know about the promised King of the Jews? Was it a truth passed down through the centuries from the time of the captivity of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? We do know that these young Jewish men were solid in their faith and openly testified of their God. We read of how God blessed their courageous stand that actually earned them favor with the political and educational leaders of that land in the East. They made no qualms about testifying that their God was the true God of the universe. Daniel wrote some amazing prophetic truths about the nation of Israel and all the nations of the world. He spoke of the Jewish Messiah and how He would be "cut off" but then be crowned as the ruler of the whole earth. Is it possible that some of those experiences and prophecies became part of the learning of the people from the East and understood by these wise men generations later? How and when did they see the star that caused them to travel? Is it possible that the glory of God that lit up the sky there in Bethlehem also was noticed in the East where the wise men resided? We do know that these men from the East were influenced in such a way that they wanted to worship the One whom they felt to be the King of the Jews.

TRIBE OF JUDAH

Monday Read Genesis 49:9-10

"Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion: who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come: and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." In this family meeting that Jacob had with his sons before His death, God revealed the future of Jacob's sons. It was there that we have this detail about the future Ruler of the Jews and indeed of the world. He would come from the family line of Judah. In the genealogy of Jesus written by the apostle, we read this in Matthew 1:1-2: *"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham begat Isaac, and Isaac begat Jacob, and Jacob begat Judah and his brethren."* That genealogy ends this way in Matthew 1:15-16: *"And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ."*

PROPHETIC TRUTHS

Tuesday Read Ezekiel 38:15-16

"Thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, and a great company, and a mighty army. And thou shall come up against my people of Israel." This is one of the many Old Testament prophecies of the events that set the stage for Jesus to return to be the King of kings and Lord of lords over all the earth. It has been our privilege in the 20th and 21st centuries to see the fulfillment of so many of these Biblical prophecies about the nation of Israel and her adversaries. Because of the disobedience of the Israelites so well documented in the Old Testament, God's chosen nation ran into tough times and the Jews were scattered around the world. It was not until 1948 that they were again recognized as a sovereign nation after WWII. God actually used the events leading up to that war to get the Jewish people back to their homeland. That occurred because of the attempt of Adolf Hitler in Germany to extinguish the Jewish race. Many from Nazi Germany fled back to Israel as well as many from other parts of the earth. After the war ended, the United Nations was formed, and Israel sought to be recognized by this world body of leaders. It is interesting how our own nation voted in favor of their being recognized as a sovereign nation. President Truman, acting contrary to the advice of his Secretary of State,

ordered that our nation vote favorably because of the Biblical truth in Genesis 12:3 where God said this: *"I will bless them that bless thee and curse them that curse thee."* That Bible verse convinced our President to recognize the nation of Israel.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

WednesdayRead Zechariah 14:1-2

"Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken...Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle." This prophecy ought to get our attention because world events in our day are a fulfillment of what the prophet said about all nations of the world going against Israel, God's chosen nation. The only nation in the world today that is not anti-Israel, judging by the actions of the United Nations in recent years, is the United State of America. Our nation has been her ally and staunch supporter through all of the attacks to which she has been subjected to over and over again. That became particularly evident during the Trump administration when the President ordered our embassy to Israel be moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, the Biblical capitol city of Israel. He also terminated the Iranian deal, the arch-enemy of Israel. Many of our politicians are globalists and seek to unite with the nations of the world. Will this Trump policy of favoritism toward Israel continue when he leaves office, or will the United States join with all the nations of the world as the prophet stated?

ARMAGEDDON

Thursday Read Revelation 19:11-16

"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 upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." The ultimate goal of many Arab leaders in the past half century that we have heard over and over again is to "wipe Israel off the face of the earth. There is an ongoing conflict that includes many acts of violence toward Israel perpetrated by neighboring Arab countries. In the future those countries will unite and take military action and invade Israel, the only question is "when"? They will achieve success until they reach Armageddon. It is at that point that the Lord Jesus, along with His armies in heaven, will fulfill the long awaited prophecy of His return to earth. He will come as the leader of His forces and defeat the nations of the world and finally take the throne of David in Jerusalem.

MILLENNIAL REIGN

Friday Read Revelation 20:4-7

"Blessed and holy is he that has 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." The Bible makes mention of two resurrections for people that are a little over a thousand years apart. Jesus Himself spoke about the two resurrections in John 5:28-29: *"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear His voice and come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation."* The first resurrection, the one of believers, is described in I Thessalonians 4:13-17, at the event commonly referred to as the Rapture when Jesus appears in the air to take true Christians home to heaven. The second resurrection occurs at the end of the thousand year reign of Christ that begins when He returns to earth to save the nation of Israel.

GREAT WHITE THRONE

Saturday Read Revelation 20:11-15

"And I saw a great white throne...And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and

the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the book, according to their works...and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." At the conclusion of the thousand year reign of Christ, all the unsaved of all time will appear before the Great White Throne to be sentenced because of their rejection of God and His truth. They will be sentenced to hell, the lake of fire of which Jesus had spoken in Matthew 25:41, where He said this: "*Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."* That is the eternal death that awaits all those who have rejected God and His provision of mercy.